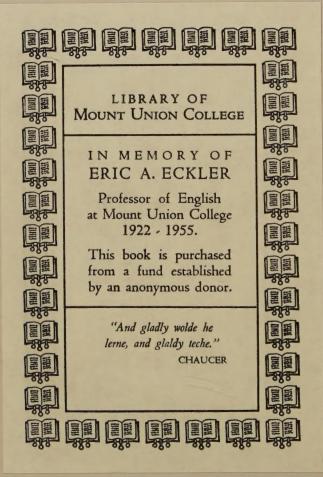


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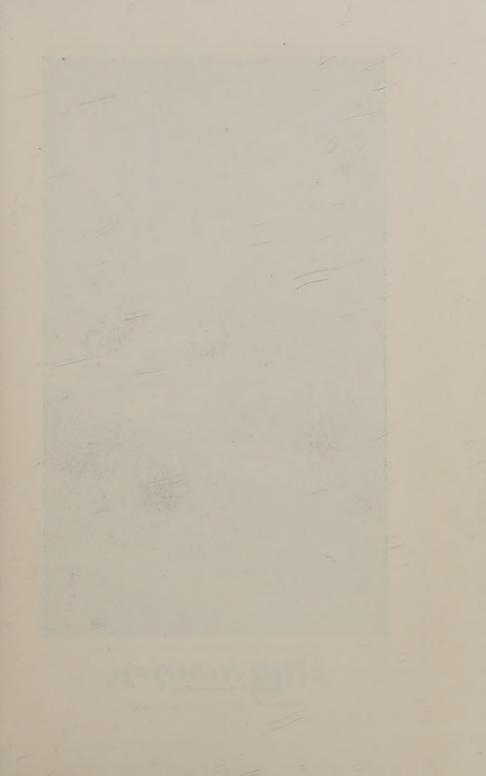
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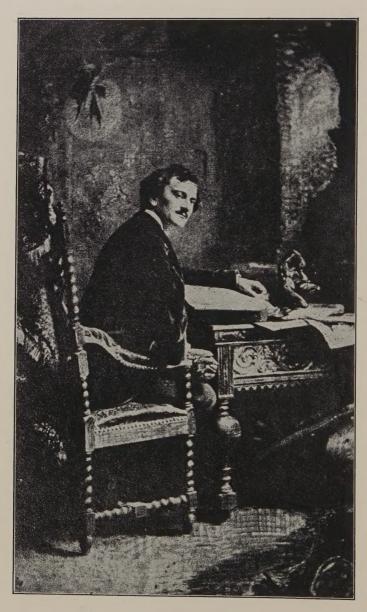


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Volume Two







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FROM A CRAYON PORTRAIT BY SARONY



The Life of STEELE MACKAYE

Genius of the Theatre

In Relation to His Times
& Contemporaries

*

A Memoir by His Son PERCY MACKAYE



PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

In Two Volumes

VOLUME TWO

BONI & LIVERIGHT : NEW YORK

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Auricle and Ventricle of Eternity; Geo. Hazelton As "Columbus No. 7." William Allen White on "One of the High and Elder Gods." 1,500 Performers; First Vocational School of "Civic Pageantry." "Far Exceeds Baircuth"—Seidl; Comparison With St. Louis Festival, 1914. Theatre-Artist and Social Educator; A Fiery Welding of Ideals; "A Choral, Dancing, Pantomimic and Dramatic School." Ideals; "A Choral, Dancing, Pantomimic and Dramatic School." Yearly Spring Festivals; Pupils Paid and Educated; Permanent Livelihood. "Harvesting a Life Time"; The Acorn of a Century Oak. "Overwhelmed With Applications"; "The Spectatorium Fever"; "Salary Cut—1,000 Expenses." "Jehovah Turns Off the Rheostat"; Total (Feb. 20), \$1,036,074. \$30,000 Model; "Sky Vision, 27,000 Sq. Ft., With Machinery For Same." "Wagner's Rainbow Realized"—Seidl; Victor Herbert's Pantomime Music. 1,000 Ton Steel Roof; Large Model Exhibited to Press, March 19, '93. "A Wonderful Creation"—"Will Revolutionize Stage Settings"; "To Art What Eiffel Tower Was To Engineering"; Author Comes From Sick-Bed. "Mac-Kaye's Triumph; Grandeur of Conception, and Realization By One Man All But Incredible." "Realism Idealized; No Painted Scenes; Light Instead of Pigment." "Unique and Impressive; True Character of the Man, Columbus; The Meanings of His Mission'; "Three Species of Music." First Use of Moving Captions; Letters of Fire, Long Antedating "Movies"; No Scene-Shifters. "Mac-Kaye's Art and Science Together Have Solved Absolute Realism"; "His Unprecedented Alliance of Art and Nature Achieves "The ism"; "His Unprecedented Alliance of Art and Nature Achieves The Despair of Painters' and the 'Delight of Poets.'" Curved Proscenium. Stage Opening in Arc; No Footlights or "Borders"; Sun and Moon Instead. Building Problems; R. Modjeski, Ship Motions; "15 Largest Elevators" For Audience. Young Sculptors and Painters; Lorado Taft, Childe Hassam, Robert Reid, etc. First Theatre Arts Monthly of Education; Drama, Music, Philosophy, Mechanics. "The MacKaye Spectatorium Magazine"; Revival of Troubadour Music. "A New Epoch In Progress of Art Culture Through Centuries." Folk Dances; "Brawls"—Fire, Canary, Napkin, etc.; Chica, Fandango, etc. Theatre-Art Festivals, 1893 and 1916; "Masque" and "Spectatorio"; 23 Years Before Cecil Sharp. Cataclysms—Strikes, Snow, Zero Cyclone, Roof Blown Off—Delay Opening Till July. Financial "Panic of '93 Paralyses Nation." Mark Twain "On His Back"; Cash Unprocurable; World's Fair 6 Weeks Off. \$250,000 To Back"; Cash Unprocurable; World's Fair 6 Weeks Off. \$250,000 To Raise In 10 Days—Or Fiasco; "Name Changed To Chicago Spectatorium." A Theatre Art Coincidence; Norman Bel Geddes; A Lost Vision Projected. (May 4) "New Triumph Approaching"; (11) "Struggle Indescribable"; (12) "On Its Legs Again—To Open Aug. 1"; (14) "My Management Officially Vindicated." 200 New \$1,000-Bonds Sold; "Within 30 Days—Success"; "But 3 Petty Contractors Bring Liens"; "Temporary Receivership. Capitalist "Sheep and Goats"; Lyman Gage's "High Tribute" To MacKaye. "Some New Method Will Be Found and We Shall Yet Reach Peace." "Battle In Progress: Machinery All Made: Show In Fair Order: Ruilding Un Progress; Machinery All Made; Show In Fair Order; Building Uncompleted." Collapse; "Almost Dying Condition"; Rest At Lake Geneva. "Stronger—To Succeed This Time—Renew Our Work With Glad Hearts Once More." Ancestral Rhythms; "Great Difficulties Overcome With Answerable Courages." "Faith, and Imperial Self-Confidences, If I Fail Label Courages." Confidence; If I Fail, I Shall Say-'What Next'?"

CHAPTER XXXI. INVINCIBLE (CHICAGO, JULY '93-DEC. '93) . .

Columbus' Life Theme; "Patience—The Passion of Great Souls." Scenario The World Finder; Genius and Mob Ignorance; Vision of New World. "Hue and Cry—Mischievous Clamour"; "Grandest Auditorium of Western World Sold For Old Junk." Demoniac

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Drama. "Genius Unspared and Unstinted"; "Has the Modern World Come To This?"; "Horrible Turmoil of Struggle"; "A Few Last Sweet Days?"; New Project. To "Vindicate His Art," MacKaye Ill, Raises \$50,000 To Create the Scenitorium. Vachel Lindsay On "Tremendous and Courageous Life of Steele MacKaye." Edgar Lee Masters On Fair's "Brilliancy" and Tragic "Miracle" of Spectatorium; Carl Sandburg. A "Transporting" Telegram; My Brothers and I Called To "The White City." Javanese Theatre and Spectatorio Compared; Hagenbeck's Wild Lions. During Almost Sleepless Years, "Oblivious of Food as Shelley." Building Scenitorium; Artists Renew Work In Old Studios. Da Vinci, Wagner, Edison, Gandhi; Fusion of Occident and Orient in New Art. Before and Beyond Motion Pictures; Dynamic Naturalism; First Stage Art of "Relativity." Ebbing Health; Economies; Touring Ohio; Writing New Chorals. Themes, Greek and Buddhistic; Trust Choral; Time and Eternity Choruses. A Credo of Victory; Super-Spectatorio of French Revolution—For Paris, 1900.

Valley of the Shadow; A Still Vaster Dream. Private Press View, Jan. 26; "MacKaye's New Régime Renders Best Efforts of 19th Century Stage Producers Crude and Unsatisfactory." \$50,000 Construction; Original Auditorium, Terra Cotta and Black, Concentrates Visuality Upon Stage. Feb. 1; "Mechanism Far From Ready"; "The Most Terrible Emergency of My Life." Greetings From Wm. and Madge Kendall; Scenitorium Opens. The World Finder, 2 Acts, 12 Scenes. Author Carried On To Stage; "His Art Challenges Nature Herself; The Triumph of Steele MacKaye As An Inventor of Extraordinary Genius Is Assured." "Nothing Like It"; "Alpha and Omega Of Its Art"; "A Light That Never Yet Was." "Superb Reception; MacKaye Has Triumphed-His Name Immortalized-Stage Productions Revolutionized." "Anaximenes of America—His Discoveries Open a New World." "Successfully Launched"; "Our Country's Greatest Stage Master." Of His Inventions Half His "Gigantic 12" Already (1894) Stolen and Exploited By Others." "Another World Very Near To All Of Us"; Last Public Appearance, "Indomitable Will; Profound Self-Respect as American of Americans." Wilson Barrett Offers Henry Arthur Jones' Chatterton As MacKaye Benefit. Wide Public Tributes; Watterson and Pullman; Professional Matinee, Scenitorium (Feb. 19). Catheart Brings Polonius' Tribute to Hamlet; Barrett In Chatterton's "Inspired Death Scene" (Feb. 20). Santa Fe R. R. Tenders MacKaye "Presidential Honours" and Private Car; Feb. 22, He Leaves for San Diego; Farewell Greeting. Colorado, Feb. 26—"The Enchanted Isle"; Dawn and "The Sacred Mountain." "For Love of—Death! His Spirit the Best In Our Theatre"; Gordon Craig. Scenitorium Services—To "Columbus of the New World of Art"; "Fall of the Curtain." To a Fellow Hamlet; "Good Night, Sweet Prince!"

A Vacant Lot—All Weeds; A Silent Drama." Biologic Theme; Inheritance; Data In Research For Truth. Steele MacKaye's Many-Sided Heritage; Its Special Emphases In His Scions. "The Economy Of Happiness"; "A Revolution In Philosophy." Acting; Novel-Writing; Community Directorship. Regional Planning; The Appalachian Trail; Its "Artist-Engineer." Focussing the People's Vision."

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Varied Mutations"; Death—And Rebirth; The Overmastering Will. Subconscious Extensions of Creative Life; A Growing Philosophy of the Theatre's Art and Its Revolutionary Technique. Lectures—1905-'12; "The Civic Theatre and the Redemption of Leisure." Masques: Saint Louis—Caliban—"The Wraith of the Spectatorium." Genius and Demos; Steele MacKaye and the Fata Morgana's Palaces." "Art—the Dangerous and Terrible—Always Gets What It Asks." Clear Contours of Imagined To-morrows.

A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE

NAME OF PLAY	Collaborator	When First Produced
MONALDI	Francis Durivage	Jan. 8, 1872
MARRIAGE (b)		Feb. 12, 1872
A Radical Fool		(1873)
ARKWRIGHT'S WIFE	Tom Taylor	July 7, 1873
Silas Marnerfor	George Eliot	(1873)
JEALOUSY	Charles Reade	Aug. ? 1873
CLANCARTY	Tom Taylor	Mar. 9, 1874
ROSE MICHEL(c)		Nov. 23, 1875
QUEEN AND WOMAN (d)	J. V. Pritchard.	Feb. 14, 1876
TWINS	A. C. Wheeler	Apr. 12, 1876
THE DANICHEFFS***		Feb. 5, 1877
Hyde and Seeque		(In autumn of 1877
WON AT LAST†		Dec. 10, 1877
THROUGH THE DARK††		Mar. 10, 1879
AN IRON WILL†††		Oct. 27, 1879
HAZEL KIRKE†††		Feb. 4, 1880
A FOOL'S ERRAND(e)		Oct. 26, 1881
DAKOLAR(f)		Apr. 6, 1885
IN SPITE OF ALL(g)		Sep. 15, 1885
THE DRAMA OF CIVILIZATION (h)		Nov. 27, 1886
RIENZI(i)		Dec. 13, 1886(j).
ANARCHY††††		May 30, 1887
PAUL KAUVAR or ANARCHY††††		Dec. 24, 1887
A NOBLE ROGUE††		July 3, 1888
SIR ALAN'S WIFE†	1	August 21, 1888
AN ARRANT KNAVE		Sept. 30, 1889
COLONEL TOM††††		Jan. 20, 1890
MONEY MAD††		Apr. 7, 1890
Cousin Larry††††		(1891)
THE WORLD FINDER(k)		Feb. 5, 1894

⁽a) Those not otherwise indicated, are original works by MacKaye alone. Those marked with (†) are different versions of the same play, produced under different titles. Those in smaller type are plays as yet unproduced (1927). Adapted from the French of Octave Feuillet's "Julie."

(b)

(c) A new play based on the French of Ernest Blum, produced at Paris, 1875.

From the French of Victor Hugo. (d)

A dramatization of Judge Tourgee's novel.

A new play based on Georges Ohnet's "Le Maitre de Forges."

A new play based on Sardou's "Andrea."

A structure of pantomime and spectacle, with music, and entre'act spoken, devised by MacKaye for W. F. Cody as a dramatization of Chronicles of the Wild West.

Total of Dramatic Works
Total of First Night Productions
Total of First Night Productions in England

DRAMATIC WORKS OF STEELE MACKAYE (a)

			` '
Where First Produced	Chief Rôle Enacted By	Management	Theatre
New York	James Steele MacKaye	J. Steele MacKaye	St. James
New York	James Steele MacKaye	J. Steele MacKaye	St. James
(Written at London	H. J. Montague	reh., in 1875, at	Wallack's)
Leeds, England	Helen Barry*	Tom Taylor	Theatre Royal
(Written at Paris	Scheduled for Stage by.	Tom Taylor	on tour in England)
Liverpool, England			?
London	2	Tom Taylor	Olympic
New York	Rose Eytinge	A. M. Palmer	Union Square
Brooklyn	Kate Claxton*	J. Steele MacKaye	Brooklyn
New York	Lester Wallack	Lester Wallack	Wallack's
New York	Charles R. Thorne	A. M. Palmer	Union Square
New York	with H. J. Montague.	was put in reh. at.	Wallack's)
New York	H. J. Montague	Lester Wallack	Wallack's
New York	George D. Chaplain	Dan H. Harkins	Fifth Avenue
Providence	Effie Ellsler**	Steele MacKaye	Low's Opera House
New York	Effie Ellsler**	Steele MacKaye	Madison Square
Philadelphia	Steele MacKaye	Steele MacKaye	Arch Street
New York	Robert B. Mantell	Steele MacKaye	Lyceum
New York	Minnie Maddern	Steele MacKaye	Lyceum
New York	William F. Cody	Cody & Salsbury	Mad. Squ. Garden
Washington	Lawrence Barrett	Lawrence Barrett.	Albaugh's Op. H.
Buffalo	Steele MacKaye	Meech Brothers	Academy of Music
New York	Joseph Haworth**	Frank W. Sanger.	Standard
Chicago	Steele MacKaye	Steele MacKaye	Chicago Op. House
Herne's Bay, England			Theatre Royal
Chicago	Stuart Robson	Stuart Robson	Chicago Op. House
Boston	Nat Goodwin	John E. Warner	Tremont
New York	Wilton Lackaye**	J. M. Hill	Standard
(Written, London, for	Kate Claxton)		
Chicago		Reed & Gross	Scenitorium

- (i) A new play based on Miss Mitford's old play of the same name.
- (j) First New York Performance, Niblo's Garden, May 2, 1887.
 - A Spectatorio, prepared for production at MacKaye's Spectatorium, Chicago, 1893.

 Produced on smaller scale, without actors, 1894. For this Spectatorio, his son,
 Percy MacKaye, wrote the Lyric Choruses—his first work for the theatre.
- * With J. Steele MacKaye in the chief male rôle.

(k)

- ** With Steele MacKaye in the chief male rôle later during the production.
- ***An anonymous adaptation (from the French), done for A. M. Palmer by MacKaye, at Stamford, Conn. Cf. pages i, 246, 266.
- Total of First Night Productions in America, 22 in 22 years (1872-1894)

A Chronological List of the Rôles Acted by Steele MacKaye (a)

8				
Rôle	Play	First Acted	City	Theatre
Othello*	Othello	Aug. 2, 1862	Baltimore, Md.	7th Regt. B'ks
Antonio*	Merch't of Venice	Aug. 8, 1862	Baltimore, Md.	7th Regt. B'ks
Hamlet*	Hamlet	Aug. 15, 1862	Baltimore, Md.	7th Regt. B'ks
Cassius*	Julius Caesar	Aug. ?, 1862	Baltimore, Md.	7th Regt. B'ks
Shylock*	Merch't of Venice	Aug. ?, 1862	Baltimore, Md.	7th Regt. B'ks
MONALDI	Monaldi	Jan. 8, 1872	New York	St. James
CARROLL GREY	Marriage	Feb. 12, 1872	New York	St. James
Hamlet**	Hamlet	Nov. ? , 1872.	Paris	Conservatoire
Richard Third**	Richard Third	Dec. ? , 1872.	Paris	Conservatoire
Hamlet	Hamlet	May 3, 1873	London	Crystal Palace.
PETER HAYES	Arkwright's Wife	July 7, 1873	Leeds, Eng	Theatre Royal.
Orlando	As You Like It	Dec. 20, 1873	London	Haymarket
PIERRE				
MICHEL	Rose Michel	Th'giving, 1875	Newark, N.J	Newark
SIR SIMON				
RENARD	Queen and Woman	Feb. 14, 1876.	Brooklyn	Brooklyn
Richard Radford	All for Her	Jan. 22, 1877	New York	Wallack's
Roman Citizen	Julius Caesar	Oct. 12, 1877	N.Y. Acad. Mu.	E.AdamsBen'ft
JOHN FLEMING	Won at Last	Apr. 19, 1879	New York	Madison Sq
CARRINGFORD	An Iron Will	Oct. 30, 1879	Providence, R.I	Low's O. House
Claude		_		Wallack's:
Melnotte	Lady of Lyons	June 1, 1880	New York	Beckett Ben'ft
Joseph	School	_		Booth's
Surface	for Scandal	June 3, 1880	New York	Raymond Ben.
RODNEY	Hazel Kirke	June, 19, 1880.	New York	Madison Sq
PITTACUS	77 1 77 7		37 37 1	1
GREEN	Hazel Kirke	? 1880	New York	Madison Sq
BARNEY	77 1 77 1	2 7000	NT 37 . 1	M P G
O'FLYNN DUNSTAN	Hazel Kirke	? 1880	New York	Madison Sq
KIRKE	Hazel Kirke	C 05 1000	Tanana Cita	A1 635 :
BURLESON	A Fool's Errand	Sept. 25, 1880. Oct. 26, 1881.	Jersey City Philadelphia	Acad. of Music
PAUL KAUVAR.	Anarchy	May 30, 1887	Buffalo	Arch Street
DELAROCHE	Paul Kauvar	Jan. ? 1888	New York	Acad. of Music Standard
PAUL KAUVAR.	Paul Kauvar	Feb. 20, 1888.	New York	Standard
Metellus	Julius Caesar	Mar. 15, 1888.	N.Y. Acad. Mu.	Tony Hart B'f't
JOHN MURRAY	A Noble Roque.	July 3, 1888	Chicago	Gr. Op. House
GUROC	Paul Kauvar	Nov. 12, 1888	New York	Gr. Op. House
PHILIPPO	An Arrant Knave.	Oct. 13, 1889	St. Louis	
JACK ADAMS	Money Mad	May 24, 1890	New York	Standard
ULUI IIDILIII	Litting Little	112dy 22, 1030	TIOW TOLK	Dianuaru

⁽a) The rôles printed in capitals are rôles in plays by Steele MacKaye, who acted seventeen rôles in his own productions of his own plays. In "Hazel Kirke", he acted five different rôles; in "Paul Kauvar", three. In this List, the rôles printed in italics are in plays written by other dramatists (Shakespeare, Bulwer Lytton, Sheridan, Simpson & Merivale). On June 28, 1880, at the Poe Statue Fund Benefit, Madison Square Theatre, MacKaye recited Poe's poem "The Raven" (cf. p. i., 355). In Sept., 1871, he directed "As You Like It," at the Boston Museum.

^{*}Acted as a soldier in the Civil War-in the 7th Regiment.

^{**}Acted in French, at Paris Conservatoire, under Régnier, Director of the Théâtre Français.

STEELE MACKAYE'S STAGE INVENTIONS

(An Epitomized List)

INVENTION	THEATRE	YEAR
"Double Stage"	Madison Square, New York	1879
Ventilation devices	Madison Square, New York	1880
Indirect lighting devices	Madison Square, New York	1880
Overstage orchestra	Madison Square, New York	1880
Fireproof devices for scenery	Lyceum, New York	1883
Air-cooling and purifying devices	Lyceum, New York	1884
Playbills and tickets	Lyceum, New York	1884
Elevator stage for orchestra	Lyceum, New York	1884
Folding chair	Lyceum & Union Sq., New York	1884
Luxauleator (curtain of light)	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Nebulator (cloud creator)	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Proscenium adjustor	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Wave Maker	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Sliding stage	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Telescopic stage	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Floating Stage	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
13 devices for illuminating and coloring the		
stage and scenery by light (colorator,		
illumiscope, rotary drums, etc., for sun,		
moon, sunset, rainbow effects, etc.)	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
40 apparatus for producing increased real-		
ism in stage effects (mechanism for cur-		
rent-makers, movable stages, etc.)	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Spectatorium (stage and auditorium for		
new musico-dramatic art)	Spectatorium, Chicago	1893
Scenitorium	Scenitorium, Chicago	1894

SOME ACTORS AND ACTRESSES

WHO HAVE PLAYED IN DRAMAS BY STEELE MACKAYE

ACTORS

Lawrence Barrett Frederick de Belleville Edmund Breese William F. Cody Charles W. Couldock Fraser Coulter John Craig Sidney Drew George Fawcett William Faversham Joseph Frankau John Gilbert William Gillette Nat Goodwin Joseph Haworth E. J. Henley James A. Herne Robert Hilliard E. M. Holland De Wolf Hopper Charles Hudson Thomas Jefferson Charles Kelly Wright Kramer Wilton Lackaye Henry Lee William J. Lemoyne

Nestor Lennon F. F. Mackay Steele MacKaye Wm. Payson MacKaye Robert B. Mantell Richard Mansfield John Mason Henry Miller Julian Mitchell H. J. Montague Dominick Murray James O'Neill John Parselle Eben Plympton B. T. Ringgold Stuart Robson William Seymour J. H. Stoddart William Terriss W. H. Thompson Charles Thorne Edwin Varrey Lester Wallack Frederick Ward Thomas Whiffen Russ Whital William Warren

ACTRESSES

Viola Allen
Helen Barry
Georgia Cayvan
Kate Claxton
Rose Coghlan
Sydney Cowell
Gabrielle du Sauld
Mrs. Edward L. Davenport
Rose Eytinge
Effie Ellsler
Bijou Heron
Maud Hosford
May Irwin

Minnie Maddern (Fiske)
Sadie Martinot
Jessie Millward
Blanche Ring
Annie Robe
Cecille Rush
Annie Russell
Minnie Seligman
Emma Sheridan (Fry)
Mrs. Sol Smith
Odette Tyler
Ida Vernon
Mrs. Thomas Whiffen

SOME INNOVATIONS OF STEELE MACKAYE

IN HIS WORK FOR THE THEATRE AND THE ALLIED ARTS

Inventive research in analysis and synthesis of Emotion and Expression, 1861: pp. 91-92 (later developed by him as "Harmonic Gymnastics," expanded and taught by him 1871-1891). Introduction of Photosculpture to America, 1866. Challenge to the educational world: "A Magna Charta for a National Theatre" (Harvard College and Steinway Hall), 1871: page i, 159. First "Experimental" Little Theatre (Professional and Amateur), New York, 1872. First American Hamlet in London, 1873: His new naturalism "fearlessly stems . . . conventionality": i, 213-214. First "Overhead Lighting" and Dispensing with Footlights, 1874: page i, 232. Projected School for Actors and Playwrights, 1874: page i, 221: School of Expression, 1875, page i, 235. Fireproofing of Scenery, 1876: page i, 254. Rising-moon device, 1877: page 280. Fire-fighting discipline: i, 346. Safety Devices and Policies in Theatres: i, 436. "Double Stage," 1879, with new principles of lighting stage and auditorium: page i, 324. Overhead Orchestra, removing musicians from auditorium, 1880: page i, 343. Children's Theatre: i, 462. Profit-sharing for authors and actors; "Societaires": i, 300-303. Entente between church and theatre: i, 337. Ventilation devices, 1880 and '84: page ii, 11. Play without a villain: i. 342. First organizing of road companies, i, 390, 391. "Professional Try-outs," i, 462. Folding Theatre-chair (1883), creating "a house all aisles," for entrance and exits: page i, 458. "Rising" orchestra (1885): lateral sliding curtains: ii, 11. First New York Electriclighted Theatre, ii, 11. Lyceum Theatre-School, 1884: page i, 476. One-Act Play Policy: ii, 28-29. Pioneering for College Dramatic Clubs, 1885: ii, 58. "Dramatic Art and the Nature of God": ii, 58. Gigantic Theatre "Cyc," 1886: page ii, 278. Seven new features (1886) for "Drama of Civilization": ii, 76: use of Indian folk-motives: ii, 82. Plan for Economic Society of American Dramatists, 1888: page ii, 255. Utilization of Three Planes of Action in Play production; New forms of "Expressionism" and "Realism," 1890: page ii, 241-242. "Rolled up" Moving Steamship: ii, 174. The "Mob" as a dramatis persona: ii, 148-159. Southern Mountain Speech and Indigenous Life, 1891: page ii, 285. Portable Theatre (1891): page ii, 301. Largest Theatre in the World, 1892-'93: the Spectatorium, its Art (ii, 428-429). its Stages (ii, 327), its Scope and Philosophy (ii, 346-348), its Relation to the Art of Motion Pictures: ii; cf. statement of A. F. Victor (following Seven Inventions, at back of Volume Two); its Synthesis of new inventions, art concepts and civic policies, suggested by the condensed list of Inventions (at front of Volume Two) and by the historical records of Part VI of Epoch.

SOME COMMENTATORS ON STEELE MACKAYE AND HIS WORKS

(Page References Under Index)

Mary Anderson, William R. Alger, Lawrence Barrett, Elwyn A. Barron, John Barrymore, David Belasco, Henry Ward Beecher, Edwin Booth, Wm. Crary Brownell, Richard Burton, Grover Cleveland, James Freeman Clarke, Joseph I. C. Clarke, William F. Cody, Wilkie Collins, Edward Gordon Craig, Nym Crinkle, S. S. Curry, Walter Damrosch, Owen Davis, François Delsarte, Cecil and William De Mille, Henry Dixey, Thomas A. Edison, Mrs. Fiske, Edwin Forrest, Daniel Frohman, John Gilbert, William Gillette, Henry A. Gildersleeve, Frank Russell Green, Lyman J. Gage, Jules Guerin, Norman Hapgood, Joseph Hatton, George C. Hazelton, Victor Herbert, James Gibbons Huneker, William Dean Howells, Robt. G. Ingersoll, George Inness, Archbishop Ireland, Henry Irving, Edgar Stillman-Kelley, C. Grant La Farge, Vachel Lindsay, F. F. Mackay, Richard Mansfield, Robert B. Mantell, John McCullough, Edgar Lee Masters, Henry Miller, Joaquin Miller, Harriet Monroe, Eugene O'Neill, Bishop Henry C. Potter, Charles Reade, Robert Reid, Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, Sydney Rosenfeld, Hopkinson Smith, Franklin H. Sargent, Anton Seidl, Joseph Severn, William Seymour, Mary Shaw, Emma Sheridan, Otis Skinner, Lorado Taft, Augustus Thomas, Louis C. Tiffany, J. Ranken Towse, George C. Tyler, Lincoln A. Wagenhals, Henry Watterson, Mrs. Thomas Whiffen, Brand Whitlock, William Allen White, Oscar Wilde, William Winter, Francis Wilson. Cf., also, in Index, tributes listed in sub-heading under Steele MacKave.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME TWO

Note: The illustrations of Epoch comprise original designs and photographs, reproduced partly on separate half-tone plates, and

partly as drawings in the text.

The designs, never till now published, include paintings, etchings, and drawings by George Inness, Gordon Craig, Jules Guerin, Childe Hassam, Joseph Jefferson, Norman Bel Geddes, Robert Edmond Jones, Joseph Urban, Matt Morgan, Hughson Hawley, Steele MacKaye, his son, William Payson MacKaye, and his grandchildren, Keith and Arvia MacKaye; portraits by Bass Otis, Frank B. Carpenter, Gordon Stevenson, N. T. Fleuss (photographed by Arnold Genthe); and line drawings of Steele MacKaye's inventions. Of the foregoing illustrations, the architectural and scenic pictures are based on designs and conceptions of Steele MacKaye.

The photographs (most of which have not been published before) represent the result of extensive research in securing rare examples of their kind, in great measure contemporaneous with the text and per-

sonally associated with their originals.

As a whole, the illustrations comprise a collection—chronological in sequence and distinctive of the cultural leadership of their times—which constitute a visual commentary on the sources, growth and influence of an artist's career.

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VOLUME TWO

The World-Finder

"Art is the most effective prayer of man . . . it always gets what it asks. It is the most dangerous and terrible mode of appealing to the awful power which vivifies the human heart and sways its destinies."

STEELE MACKAYE.





PART IV

In Spite of All

"When the art of a people is degraded—their decadence is near at hand; when it is progressively elevated—their salvation and glory are assured. Let them who have eyes to see the light—lips to announce it—limbs to work for it—struggle to make our country the everlasting home of an enlightened, aspiring art: art which is an unceasing prayer for a nobler manhood for men.—Then will the grandeur of our destiny be certain."

STEELE MACKAYE.



PROPRIETORS: THE AMERICAN THEATRE BUILDING AND MANAGING COMPANY

Steele MacMaye, General Manager

the Panagement of the Lyceum Theatre begs to announce that the opening night of that establishment has been fired for Caster Ponday evening, April 6th, 1885.

• • • In the building itself it has been sought to combine every element of safety, convenience and comfort, with such acchitectural and decorative beauty as the best arrises can contribute, together with the latest cheatrical inventions of Pr. Packaye, such as the improve

safety thair, the orthestral pabilion and barious stage appliances conducive to perfect persoformances.

Above is a replica of the announcement of the Lyceum Theatre opening, 1885. The design at top, devised then by Steele MacKaye and used by him, as the official emblem of his theatre, on letterheads and programmes, was retained by Daniel Frohman during his management there (1886-1902), and has remained the official emblem of his second Lyceum Theatre, on West Forty-fifth Street, still functioning under his management, in 1927.

CHAPTER XVII

DRAMATIST—TEACHER—MANAGER

LYCEUM THEATRE

Dakolar—Triumph and Turbulence

New York, Ridgefield, Conn.

April, 1885—September, 1885

LYCEUM THEATRE

MACKAYE'S THREE THEATRE RÉGIMES: THEIR EXTENDING INFLUENCES



Easter monday, april 6th, 1885: For Steele MacKaye it was a critical moment, facing significantly toward past achievements, and future extensions of his work. For the third time, within thirteen years, in New York City, he now opened a new theatre, named and designed by himself, as author-director of his own play and theatrical enterprise. For the third time, the novelty, daring and imagination of his declared policy and project were the dramatic sensation of the

season and the centre of a creative ferment, radiating constructive influences far beyond the time and place of their occasion.

In 1872, the extending influences of his first St. James Theatre experiment were creative factors, in the theatrical world, not so much of a new managerial policy (for his own was then considered Quixotic), as—through their effect upon leading actors (like Montgomery, Montague, McCullough, etc.)—of a new conception and regimen of acting; while—in the world non-theatrical—these influences were far-reaching in their revolution of entrenched methods in the teaching of æsthetic expression, by virtue of the principles evolved by MacKaye in his science of "harmonic gymnastics," which, under other labels to-day, are developing fresh resources in the fecund movements of eurhythmics, pantomimic expression, and the vital synthesis of psychological and physical training, through-

5

out our national education. . . . In 1880-'81, the extending influences of his Madison Square Theatre achievement were, as we have seen, very definite factors in shaping the theatrical world. by projecting his managerial policies, on a revolutionizing scale of enormous success, throughout the "road" system of America, launching thereby the Charles Frohman régime, with its prodigious after-influence upon the theatres of America, Canada, England and Australia, extending to present-day successors of that régime. In artistic influences, also, the projection of Steele MacKaye's ideas, through the Madison Square Theatre, developed a new naturalism in acting and a new scientific method of directorship, which extended his policy of substituting an organised system of training apprentices, for the former haphazard recruiting of actors by chance, which prevailed after the breakdown of the old stock company training. . . . In 1884-'85, this new policy was now broadened by MacKave to include his plan for a national conservatory of acting, with intensive training in directorship, embracing in its dual aim the social community as well as the theatre proper. This dual aim, fused as one in his Lyceum Theatre plan, was—from his initial brilliant launching of it—destined to survive in two separate régimes (losing its highest validity by that split):one, the school, moving toward its present-day relation with Columbia University; the other, the theatre, lasting-through another Frohman régime (that of Daniel)-for more than a decade of prosperous productions (including felicitous works by Bronson Howard,* David Belasco and Henry De Mille), the managerial policy of which was largely based in training and experience acquired under its founder, MacKaye, with whom his successors in directorship had been personally associated as friends and working assistants. This general truth has been stated by one who began at the Lyceum his own career under MacKaye's directorship, Mr. Lincoln A. Wagenhals, the well-known New York producing manager, who has written, in 1924: †

"It is to the projective force of such a man as Steele MacKaye, that the tremendous forward movement of the American Theatre may be attributed."

These extending influences—remarkable as they were in anony-

^{*} Cf. on page ii, 49, MacKaye's fight to have his Lyceum policies retained in the interests of Bronson Howard's work as dramatist—to succeed his own there. † Cf. the fuller statement of Mr. Wagenhals, on page ii, 15.

mously leavening the historic background of our theatre with imaginative ideas of a courageous artist—are, perhaps, to-day even more significant as prophecy than as history, more inspiring as creative potentialities of art than as simple actualities of record.

"THE ARTIST OF THE THEATRE": GORDON CRAIG AND "LONG LIVE THE KING!"

For here, in the heart of our greatest city, on three distinctive occasions, increasingly rich with ripening thought and experience, a single artist of the theatre, borrowing no aid of prestige or financial endowment from any established institution, but moved solely by his individual initiative and vision, took upon himself the duties of artistic authority in his own institution, responsibly basing it in a deeply social ideal of the playhouse—an æsthetic policy fused with a moral philosophy; making it both school and theatre, interpretive and creative; conceiving its commercial function as feudal to its artistic, and constituting himself in leadership both its architect and director: viceregent of the only legitimate King of the theatre's dominion,—Imagination.

"Long live the King!" has cried in our day another valorous artist of the theatre, one equally uncompromising in fibre, whose creative spirit has beautifully hailed the imbuing spirit of this memoir with his own Ave! of remembering homage * : Edward Gordon Craig of the incomparable Mask.—At the beginning of his eloquently imaginative book, On the Art of the Theatre, Craig says:

"I speak here as the artist and though all artists labour and most are poor, all are loyal, all are the worshippers of Royalty . . . of Imagination, that only power which achieves true Freedom.—As for me, I am a free man, by the grace of Royalty. Long live the King!"

Expressing that power, Imagination, by his artist hand, Craig himself has revealed in an etching (a gracious gift of friendship here reproduced) that "grace of Royalty" in the theatre's true leadership, concerning which he has written to me:

"As if we did not all of us KNOW that the Poet or Artist, must lead, shape the stage, the lamps, and the whole means for expressing what HE thinks—not what the Critic, or the Public, or even the Angels think.—What makes, then, these 'authorised' critics think they can force upon us a falsehood to the contrary?"

These words of a great artist-leader to-day bear directly on * Cf. page ii, 460.

the prophetic significance of Steele MacKaye, as artist leader of the Lyceum Theatre, in 1885.—Never before then, in America, had there reigned, in his own house, an all-round "Artist of the Theatre" * -of that many-lensed ideal so often cited by Craig himself in his writings: an ideal of disciplined versatility wherein no university has ever conferred the degree of "Master of Arts."-In common, of course, with all other artists, Steele MacKaye's tools of craftsmanship were conditioned by his time and place. His vision, however, was not thus limited, but saw—in respect to his synthetic art -a clear and structural ideal, which still to-day beckons from a distant future.—Therefore, from the maze of recorded yesterdays, obscure even then to most of his contemporaries with whom he worked, it is needful to lift some perennial meanings which illumined his mind and work, in order, if possible, to throw light not only on the bare facts of this biography, but on some of the very reasons why it was lived. Some of these meanings are implicit in the present chapter.

DAKOLAR: A FIRST "FIRST NIGHT": - "MELTED INTO THIN AIR!"

Dimly yet indelibly I recall that opening night of the Lyceum Theatre and of Dakolar—the first "first night" of a play by my father (or of any play) in my memory.†—There comes back to me faintly clear the unforgetable melody of a folk song, sung plaintively sweet and high by a fisher girl, beside the sea-tides of old Brittany, while the deep voices of fishermen, rhythmically drawing their nets, join her in choral refrain. I have hummed snatches of that song all my life. To me then it was a voice of magic, conjuring another world from the mysterious stage twilight, glimpsed suddenly behind the strange lateral-sliding curtains, that rolled swiftly aside in waves of rushing colour—where I watched from a right stage-box, seated between my mother and Colonel Henry Watterson.—I did not know then that it was the voice of my father's pupil, Emma Sheridan, joined by voices of men students

† I remember, however, a moment in a rehearsal, conducted by my father, more than five years earlier (1879). Cf. page i, 326.

^{*} In this comprehensive ideal of Theatre Artist, he added to the more usually cited functions of producing director, actor, scenic and costume designer, deviser of lightings and plastic groupings—the functions of inventor, who was possessed of expert knowledge of all material stage workings; of teacher, equipped with thorough training in exthetic psychology and its rhythmic embodiment; and of dramatist—creator of the raison d'être of theatrical production, the play itself.

To frew Berey machage ~



from .

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ETCHING BY EDWARD GORDON CRAIG

"I speak here as the artist, and though all artists labour and most are poor, all are loyal, all are worshippers of Royalty—of Imagination, that only power which attains true Freedom."—EDWARD GORDON CRAIG, "On the Art of the Theatre" (page ii, 7).



Actor-Manager (from a rare, unpublished photograph). HENRY IRVING

ENGLISH FRIENDS OF MACKAYE'S NEW LYCEUM THEATRE (1885)

(Index.)



Novelist-Dramatist.

from his Theatre-School, who were enacting the "supers," amongst whom, then publicly unknown, were Robert Tabor and George Fawcett. I did not know, either, that the tall, rugged figure of the blacksmith's son, Dakolar, was the form of Robert Mantell, destined afterward to a long distinguished career in Shakespearean rôles. Neither could I then—a child of ten—imagine why my brillianteved father appeared so pale and worn, as he stepped from between the curtains, bowing gracefully to the tumultuous plaudits of the house and spoke a few clear-ringing words across the footlights. Nor could I then have dreamed—nor he himself, who glanced a smile toward our box-that I should one day endeavour, in this far time, to interpret some of the significances behind those words of his—thirty years after his death, to a public for whom that public of his playhouse are now but misty shadows; yet who themselves, with the one who writes these words, shall as fleetingly merge into the insubstantial. So soon are we shadow-players all "melted into air-into thin air!"

But the shadowy critics are sharpening their first-night pencils, and writing their morning reviews, in their midnight sanctums—of old scrap-books. Here is what one of them wrote there; and Steele MacKaye must have bethought him of a vanished "dream-theatre," and of a resplendent Sunflower, withered between the dilemma-horns of an old Griffin, when he glanced at a headline of The Morning Journal (April 7th) and read:

"WILDE OUTDONE BY MACKAYE: THE GORGEOUS LYCEUM THEATRE OPENS"

"A Brilliant Gathering and a Remarkable Performance.

"A distinguished audience poured into the new theatre on Fourth Avenue. Many of them came in carriages with liveried coachmen, for the audience were drawn from the best New York society, which came in a crush. You turn the corner of 23rd Street and suddenly find yourself, as you pass the Academy of Design, in front of two long rows of stone steps. These lead directly into the auditorium—small, unique and exceedingly pleasing. It belongs to no school, unless the ultra-æsthetic—the school of Wilde outdone by MacKaye. . . . Lighted up, the theatre formed a very brilliant gem.—The play, scenery, theatre, are successful."

"RANKS WITH THE LEADING THEATRES OF THE AGE." "DAKOLAR—INCESSANTLY INTERESTING, STRONG AND SIGNIFICANT"

"The opening of a new theatre," wrote William Winter, in the Tribune, "started in the right spirit, must be regarded as an important public event; for such an institution, should it prosper, will exert far-

reaching educational influences.—The New Lyceum Theatre, brilliantly opened last night, has started with a proclamation full of golden promise, and certainly it bids fair to rank with the leading theatres of the age. . . . Much might be said about the spacious avenues of ingress and egress, the commodious arrangement of seats, the admirable facilities for ventilation, the soft and pleasant lights, the luxurious upholstery, the beautiful decorations-all combining in a general result of magnificence and comfort.—Fortunately, in the management of the Lyceum Theatre there is one element which justifies an eager anticipation of true dramatic and literary excellence. As long as Mr. Steele MacKaye is associated with its fortunes, the theatre will be served with a sincere and resolute devotion to high ideals of art. This, at present. is the chief augury of its useful and brilliant future. It was Mr. MacKave who invented and established almost all that was best in the Madison Square Theatre, and it is to the same inventive, indomitable, and perhaps somewhat visionary but originative and enthusiastic mind, that this new theatre, the Lyceum, owes its existence and its many merits.

"The new play from Mr. MacKaye's pen contains a strong, pathetic, significant plot, characters essentially dramatic and well-contrasted, situations of exciting suspense and almost tragic force, and a thoughtful, affecting study of human nature.—The subject is not new. Mr. MacKave has told over again the story of The Forgemaster. He has told it, however, in a way of his own. The novelty of his piece resides in his invention and use of motives, in his arrangement of incidents, and in his language. Dakolar is incessantly interesting, and all its accessories are picturesque. It was acted with uncommon smoothness by Mr. Mantell, Miss Viola Allen, Miss Sadie Martinot, and Mr. J. B. Mason in the chief parts. . . . The ingenious use of the curtains, before the play began, had a particularly pleasing effect. curtains move laterally,* disclosing the band, seated in a pavilion, and as they are drawn back, this pavilion disappears with the musicians upon it, and the stage is revealed. Mr. MacKaye, called before the curtain, expressed a sincere ambition in earnest words. . . . Mr. MacKave re-enters the dramatic field with good hope of continued prosperity, and good reason to be satisfied with the first step in a new field of action."

The theatre is thus further described by the press, citing some details which have long become commonplaces, but were then startling novelties introduced by MacKaye, while some others of his original innovations have not been duplicated elsewhere.

* This lateral curtain, MacKaye's invention, was the first of the kind ever used.

[&]quot;A MASTER HAND"; MANY INNOVATIONS; "ELECTRICITY FOR FIRST TIME"

"From the moment the audience entered the wainscoted vestibule there were exclamations of surprise. Everything was a departure from

* This leteral curtain MacKaya's invention was the first of the fir

the hackneyed forms of theatrical decoration.—The electric light from the clustered globes pendant from the ceiling is soft and pleasantly diffused. Similar lights smoulder under green sconces along the face of the gallery, like fire in monster emeralds. . . . But these things are not obtrusive. A master hand has blent them into a general effect, avoiding all aggressive detail. . . . The theatre is rich without being gaudy, tasteful without being tricky, reposeful and comfortable without being flamboyant. . . . The interior of Dakolar's house is an entirely new departure in stage asthetics. The room was left severely plain, but in color, form and ornamentation nothing like it has ever been

seen on our stage. It elicited an instant burst of applause.

"The New Lyceum Theatre covers two city lots. The front is substantially built of brick, relieved by gray stone. The vestibule is solidly and handsomely lined with dark oak. On one side is the coat room; on the other are seats for ladies who wait for their carriages. Two wide stairways lead to the auditorium, also reached by two side entrances from the street. . . . Under the theatre four steam engines are constantly running. Two furnish the electricity with which the house is lighted throughout; one works the ventilating apparatus, which supplies the auditorium with medicated air, charged with ozone; the fourth raises and lowers an elevator car in which the musicians are placed. The offices of the managers are large and elegantly furnished. There are sitting-rooms for ladies, a smoking-room for gentlemen, dressing-rooms unusually comfortable, fitted with running water and ample mirrors, and well ventilated. Steele MacKaye has filled the house with his practical inventions. . . . The auditorium will hold \$1,200 and seat over 600 persons. There are four wide aisles on the first floor, besides the extra aisles which the patent chairs make when folded. The chairs * are arranged in groups of three and four, so that nobody will be incommoded by people pushing past, and so that one may take a row of seats, as one would take a private box. There is only one balcony. . . . All the lights are electric, although gas is laid on in case of accident. At first view, the stage seems too high; but this is a device for a surprise. - The curtains open and a band of 23 musicians, led by Edward Mollenhauer, are seen sitting in a gorgeous pavilion, with a view of the sea. When the overture is played the curtains cross, and lo! the pavilion has disappeared, and the real stage is disclosed in a broad frame of gold.

"This stage is wide but not deep, so that every expression of the actors may be distinctly seen. It is lighted by electricity for the first time—and the changes in the colors of the lights are cleverly arranged. The footlights are in a separate frame at some distance from the stage, and are also electric. The illumination of every part of the theatre is controlled from the prompter's box. There is no seat which does not command a full view of the entire stage.—The Lyceum Theatre is in every respect a unique creation, unlike any other place of amusement.—
The ideas of Steele MacKaye have been called impracticable; but we

^{*} For some cartoons concerning these unprecedented chairs in what the press termed "MacKaye's Utopia Theatre," see illustration at back of volume.

have seen them carried out, not only practically but profitably in the miraculous Madison Square, and they appear to be equally practical in his new theatre. Here he has organized the American Theatre Building Company, which owns the theatre; he has personally supervised every detail of its erection and decoration; invented its novelties; written the play, and carefully rehearsed all the actors and supernumeraries. ''Tis not in mortals to command success'; but Steele MacKaye has certainly deserved it."

"MOST CHARMING THEATRE IN THE WORLD"; MANTELL, MASON, ALLEN, MARTINOT

"Overcrowded with fashionable people, the gentlemen in full dress, the ladies in all the gilt and crimson glories of their Easter toilettes, the new Lyceum Theatre opened with great elegance. . . . In Dakolar, as the vellow satin playbill acknowledges, MacKaye has dramatized Le Maître des Forges. His first act is almost the same as that of Lady Clare. Had Dakolar been produced before Lady Clare, it might run as long as Hazel Kirke. Now the piece would be more successful had not the character of the old retainer reminded the audience of Dunstan in Hazel Kirke, and had not this Dunstan been so capitally burlesqued in Adonis. The part was entrusted to Joseph Frankau, a clever young actor, but Mr. MacKaye would have given more dignity to the character, had he acted it himself, as he at first intended. . . . The new and handsome scenery is by Richard Marston and Hughson Hawley. In the acting, Robert Mantell, J. B. Mason, Viola Allen, Sadie Martinot, all distinguished themselves. Mr. Mantell, as Dakolar, was never better. Sadie Martinot conquered the audience both by her comedy and her costumes. The pupils of the School of Acting were picturesquely attired as peasants and fisherfolk."

The reviews in general were lavish in their laudations, among which the following expressions were typical:

"There is no theatre in New York or Paris so beautiful and gemlike as MacKaye's. Founder also of the Madison Square, Steele MacKaye has given New York its two most beautiful and unique places of amusement."—"Unconventional: A masterpiece of artifice and novelty: settings never excelled." "Certainly the most charming theatre in the world."—"MacKaye's drama is incomparably superior to the two other produced versions of Le Maître des Forges. . . ." "In MacKaye's little temple are his original devices—the inventions of our shrewdest Yankee, in every mechanical contrivance,* expressed in beautiful tints and tones. The universe has combined to make of this playhouse a great study." . . . "Throughout the land, for several seasons now, in every city, town and hamlet has been heard the remark

^{*&}quot;In MacKaye's Lyceum Theatre," wrote the N. Y. World (July 22, '85), "the system of speaking tubes, pneumatic tubes and electric communication is as good as that in Mr. William H. Vanderbilt's house, which is marvellous for its efficiency."

to those visiting New York: 'Be sure to see the Madison Square!' And in every city-hotel may be seen the familiar picture of the interior of that popular playhouse.—But now it takes a secondary place. 'Le Roi est mort. Vive le Roi!' For another more beautiful little gem has sprung into existence (within three blocks east of it) by the touch of the same Aladdin who gave it life—Mr. Steele MacKaye. So, in the name of that royal originator—Vive le Roi!"

"'BACK FROM ELBA'-TRIUMPHANT SUCCESS!"

So "the debatable morrow" of the opening had brought forth an enthusiastic outburst, in unanimous recognition of Steele MacKaye's new theatre, as the foremost in beauty and expert modern mechanism in New York—and probably then in the world, excelling its only rival, the Madison Square, by the increased artistic stature of the founder of both. "Back from the Theatrical Elba," this recognition of an achievement for which, during four years, he had waited and worked with tireless will and invention, was an hour of auspicious triumph for some of his dreams, however "Napoleonic" its brevity.—Here, then, for that brilliant hour, he stood on another shining peak of success. Upon his play the favourable verdict, though strong, was not as unanimous as upon his theatre; yet less flattering comments had been made, five years before, upon Hazel Kirke than any that now were made upon Dakolar. So no auguries of non-success could prove anything—at the moment.

A significant part of his triumph was the acting personnel which he himself had chosen and directed.—In the first two productions of his plays (Dakolar and In Spite of All), which launched the Lyceum Theatre upon its long, prosperous career, he had personally gathered about him a group of young actors and actresses—some making under him their débuts, others then just beginning to be known,—who, if they could be gathered back to-day in one company, would comprise an all-star cast of rare distinction. These two plays had but a few parts, in which he cast these artists:—Robert B. Mantell, John Mason, Richard Mansfield, Viola Allen, Sadie Martinot, Minnie Maddern (afterward Mrs. Fiske).—This galaxy was not accidental. It was due to his own insight of selection, and to his personality and art in stage directing: qualities attested in this letter, written to me, in 1921, by Robert Mantell:

MANTELL ON MACKAYE'S GENIUS AS DIRECTOR: "LABORATORY PRACTICE"; KILLING THE "DOOK"; THE "FLOATING FIDDLERS"

"My dear Percy. Here are a few lines about your dear father. In my opinion, Steele MacKaye was one of the greatest men that ever

lived in the theatrical world, as inventor, artist, and dramatist. In 1885, I had the honour of playing the leading part in his drama, Dakolar. We had an exceptionally fine company—Sadie Martinot, Viola Allen, Kate Forsythe,* John Mason, Emma Sheridan, and—do you know?—Wagenhals and Kemper, who since have become big men in

the managerial world, 'suped' in the crowd!

"Your father was a wonderful stage-director. At rehearsals he always gave his players great encouragement, instead of employing the opposite too general method.—When he was rehearsing Dakolar, I picked up a pair of gloves from the table, quite innocently and unconsciously, thereby revealing and clarifying a critical moment in the plot.—'Stop!' roared your father, from the auditorium.—Rushing down the aisle and springing over the footlights, he ran to me, seized my hand and wrung it, as it never was wrung before nor since.—'Great, my boy! Splendid!' he said to me.—Then he turned to a group of students, from his theatre-school, who were there witnessing the rehearsal as 'laboratory practice': 'This young man,' he said, 'will be a great actor some day. He has brains, and he uses them in his work.'—I, of course, was both pleased and embarrassed.

"The opening night of Dakolar was not without its humorous incidents. Joe Frankau, playing a servant, had this line to speak (while plugging a brace of pistols, so that Dakolar couldn't use them):—'He will not kill the Duke.' Frankau read it: 'He will not kill the Dook' -very positive of the 'oo.' An Englishman in the audience shouted: 'Bravo, my boy! Bravo!' And the house, laughing, took up the Englishman's cry.—Frankau, encouraged by his apparent hit, repeated the line again and again, getting the house into roars of laughter. Thereupon your father rushed back scene and warned Frankau, in a loud stage whisper, that if he didn't stop it, he would kill him instead of the Duke. . . . On that night, after the play, your father gave us a great banquet, across the street at the Ashland House. Among the non-professional notables who attended were Henry Watterson, John H. Bird and Judge Brady.—Your father, in a speech, made one of the greatest hits in the history of after-dinner speaking. But it was a speech printable only with numerous blanks and exclamation points!

"He was a noted inventor of stage devices, many of them—like the double stage—being marvels of ingenuity. A fine idea of his, however, got momentarily out of order, at the opening of Dakolar.—He conceived the idea of drawing the tableau-curtains before the start of the play, revealing the orchestra on the stage in a space about as narrow as an orchestra pit. There, after the overture, the orchestra would be hoisted into the rigging loft, the fiddlers floating away, as it were, on their own magic melodies.—But, on the very first night, the device got temporarily stuck, and refused to lift the orchestra more than half way. Next morning, one of the newspapers had great fun over it, suggesting that MacKaye, instead of sending his orchestra to heaven, should have sent it to hell!

^{*} On April 16, Kate Forsythe succeeded to the part of Madeleine, acted by Viola Allen.

"All in all, your father was a very wonderful man, a great and loyal friend of the actor, and one of the most charming men socially I have ever encountered in my life."

WAGENHALS, TABOR, FAWCETT, "SUPERS"; "A GIANT IN PERSONALITY";
AUGUSTUS THOMAS ON "A MASTER OF EXPRESSION"

In connection with this reference by Robert Mantell to the distinguished producing managers, Wagenhals and Kemper, Mr. Lincoln A. Wagenhals of that firm has also written to me (1924), in recollection of those times:

"I cherish highly the memory of your father. No one, so fortunate as to have had even a casual association with Steele MacKaye, could ever forget him. . . . Dakolar was presented by him when I was a youngster studying at his Lyceum Theatre-School.—With Robert Tabor, Dorothy Dorr, Wilfred Buckland, George Fawcett, Alice Fisher, Emma Sheridan,* and about one hundred ambitious stage-struck youth, we were engaged to appear as 'supers,' though your father never called us that, at the staggering stipend of five dollars weekly, but—the ghost never walked! (We laugh now, but it was a tragedy then.) . . . Your father was a giant in personality, in forcefulness, in intellect. I am not unduly laudatory when I say that it is to the projective force of such a man as Steele MacKaye that the tremendous forward movement of the American theatre may be attributed. To me, he was the greatest man of the theatre I have ever known."

To this impression of a theatrical producer, who has known the personal influence of MacKaye's directorship, may pertinently be added here these words of Augustus Thomas, his fellow dramatist and friend, who has written:

"Steele MacKaye was a master of the art of physical expression. No man of his day, and none that I know now, had or has an equal knowledge of the purpose or effect of gesture, of facial expression, or of the eloquence of restraint. His knowledge of these was practical. He knew exactly what he wished before he directed it. He had the ability to make his wish understood, and he had the talent to do the thing he asked the actor to do."

A POTENTIAL DA VINCI AND THE DI MEDICI OF PILLS; ART—AND THE PROCESSION OF MEDICAMENTS

At this time, on the impecunious destiny of Steele MacKaye,

*"Other pupils in my father's Theatre-School, besides those mentioned by Mr. Wagenhals. were—Blanche Walsh, Harriet Ford, Wilfred Buckland, George Foster Platt, Jennie Eustace, Grace Kimball, Cora Maynard, Wm. Ordway Partridge, White Whittlesey, Edith Chapman. "This list," writes David Belasco (in Wm. Winter's Life of David Belasco, p. 348, Vol. I), who afterwards taught them in that school, "stands as a refutation of the statement that the school of acting is not of benefit in preparing for the stage."—"The Lyceum Theatre School of Acting," writes Wm. Winter (same volume and page), "was founded by Steele MacKaye."

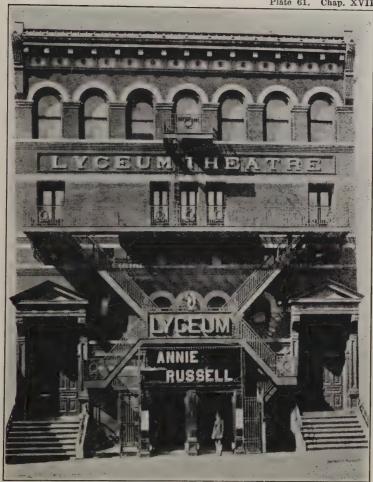
potential Da Vinci of the Theatre "born out of time," there had dawned a certain Brent Good, pill-magnate and auspicious Di Medici: verily a portent of art super-American!—Dazzled by the brilliant imaginings of MacKaye for his Lyceum Theatre, this millionaire proprietor of Carter's Little Liver Pills had envisioned in those shining images—not the golden dreams of a Da Vinci, but a more tinkling "symbol" of his own—the silver Dollar. In consequence, he had cast a good-sized loaf of his own bread-stuff of dreams on the stormy waters of art, in the vaguely benevolent hope of recouping a corner in the bread market, while helping his friend, MacKaye, to float his brilliant galleon of art. In casting this stake, however, he wore no sacramental robe or halo, lacking which he was the more welcome to MacKaye, as a plain, bluff "angel" who brought to his rescue none of those "saving" graces, which had adorned the churchly brethren of an earlier occasion.

Reviewing, indeed, those "angels" of an artist's career, the Muse of Comedy might annotate this chronicle-history with a pageant-allegory of MacKaye's financial backers. Here, to garnish his banquet of Dramatic Art, they come filing, in panoply of the years, bearing on glittering salvers their offerings of hors-d'œuvres touchingly emetic: 1872—Densmore, with Garfield Tea; 1880—the Mallory Twins, with "Wormwood"; 1882—George W. Childs, with "Wild Thyme," to lure the "Kentucky Griffin" into a Parnassan Restaurant for Oscar Wilde; 1885—after the elusive feast: Brent Good, with Little Liver Pills; 1886—an effervescing Aspirant, anonymous, with consoling vitamins of Horlick's Malted Milk.*—So the shining Processional of Medicaments passes to Nepenthe of the pale mendicant, Art.

Perhaps, in 1885, but for the partial backing of Brent Good, the Lyceum Theatre might never have been built.† Once built and equipped with MacKaye's dreams, at a total cost of over \$100,000 (nearly half a million, in present money value), the public press had hailed it as the most brilliant "gem" in the theatrical world. How, then, should this expensive jewel be cashed in? What more natural than by virtue of another of MacKaye's dreams—another

* Cf. page ii, 62. For the other references, see under Index.

[†]A modest investment of Col. MacKaye (\$15,000) in the Lyceum enterprise was, of course, quite inadequate to float such a project in full.—In a letter to his son from abroad, expressing great satisfaction at the auspicious opening of the Lyceum Theatre, the Colonel now, in 1885, for the first time (and thenceforward), signed his name with the full Mac, which Steele MacKaye had first adopted in 1869.





LYCEUM THEATRE, NEW YORK (1885-1902)

Founded by Steele MacKaye. Opened with his play, "Dakolar," April 6, 1885, its unique charm was hailed as "Oscar Wilde Outdone by MacKaye." Exterior photo, 1901. Interior shows MacKaye's patented folding-chairs, creating wide aisles (cf. pages 458-460, and INVENTIONS, at back of Volume One).

Plate 62. Chap. XVII.

JOHN MASON



ROBERT B. MANTELL



VIOLA ALLEN



SADIE MARTINOT



GEORGE FAWCETT



EMMA SHERIDAN

LEADING PERFORMERS (upper 4) AND STUDENT-APPRENTICES (lower 2) Under directorship of Steele MacKaye in his play, "Dakolar," which opened his Lyceum Theatre, New York, April 6, 1885 (pages 8-9, 14-15).

potential Hazel Kirke by the same author—only four blocks away from the former dice-throw? This was hardly the thought of Mac-Kaye himself, but it was probably the guess of Brent Good, concerning MacKaye, for the still-swarming companies of Hazel Kirke cast a peculiar glamour of millions on its impecunious author.

CRUCIAL DELAYS; FINANCIAL CRISIS; "KILLING THE GOLDEN GOOSE"

Dakolar, none the less, was a strong melodrama, tinged with popular comedy, and given its proper chance, acted by its brilliant company, might well have weathered the first crisis of a house, which had opened heavily in debt, -except for the crucial factor of delay in opening! Already it was late April. "Society" was beginning to turn its thoughts toward the country; and "society," which had launched the little Madison Square Theatre in the month of February, and so had "set the fashion" for its followers, the aping masses, was now needed to give the certainty of reclam to the rival little playhouse, in its "out-of-the-district" site on Fourth Avenue, in order to launch it securely on the precarious summer season.—Dependable business associates and proper publicity were also needed. But MacKaye, while immersed in creating the theatre itself, had been practically foiled by the business management on whom he had counted—a story too long and intricate for this chapter.*

So the crisis in finances fell, sudden and disastrous. It would be easy and perhaps picturesque to ascribe it to the "extravagant" genius of MacKaye, "the brilliantly artistic, but impractical"; but it would not be true. Of his own personal purse he was often wildly extravagant, but never with the money of contractual investors in his enterprises. The still-surviving records which this biographer has taken pains to examine, labyrinthan in their business complexities and human problems, reveal an executive genius astonishingly unwayward in an artist who undoubtedly also was extremely wayward—a paradox of capacities, including a patience so laborious, a judgment so tactful, an insight in material ways and means so practically sound, that it is impossible to ignore it in any true estimate of this strangely fascinating character, who belied all customary categories under which the "extravagances" of artistic genius are wont to be labelled and psychologically disposed of. Such categories were used in published comments upon the

^{*} In the N. Y. Dramatic Times, Saturday, June 20, '85, appeared a long letter to the Editor, signed by Steele MacKaye, under the caption: "The Truth at Last. Mr. MacKaye tells the whole story of the Lyceum scheme."

sudden financial set-back which befell the Lyceum Theatre soon after its launching.

"I have been lied about so constantly," said Steele MacKaye in an interview * at the time, "that I have grown callous to it. There are some people scheming to get this theatre and, for the purpose of furthering their own ends, they try to make me out extravagant. They will have a hard time doing it. The facts show that it would be impossible for any one, no matter who he might be, to build a theatre like this under the same circumstances—working night and day in order to open at the time advertised—for any less money than that which was expended. . . . I have worked arduously to perfect a scheme which I have had in my mind ever since I lost the Madison Square Theatre.-My desire has always been to put other people in the business department, and to give my whole attention to the creative work. I desire to remain, from morning to night, in what I may call my workshop; and, to tell the truth, I have not taken more than three hours sleep of a night for the last fifteen months, in building up what is now the Lyceum Theatre. . . . The financial embarrassments. I suppose, are natural enough. I have done my utmost to counteract them, but there have apparently been influences from the inside that have destroyed all my efforts."

"In the fight that is going on at the Lyceum Theatre," wrote the editor of Music and Drama (June 2nd), "we confess that our sympathies are all with Mr. Steele MacKaye. It was from his brain that the scheme of building the theatre evolved, and by his industry and perseverance that the house was completed. Now, when this is done,—when a beautiful playhouse, admirable and unexcelled, is offered to the public and publicly admired,—men, who did nothing to attain this end, rise up and try to force MacKaye out, in order to gain possession for themselves. It is our earnest hope that they may not succeed, but MacKaye's experience at the Madison Square is too recent, and the symptoms of the cases are too similar, to make this hope very strong."

Some weeks earlier The N. Y. Keynote (May 9th) had written:

"These straits of the Lyceum call forth attacks upon Steele Mac-Kaye.—Why? What has he not done which he agreed to do? Has he not built the theatre, filled it with clever inventions, furnished it with a strong company and a new play? Is it his fault that the play does not draw enough money to pay immediately all the expenses of building and furnishing the theatre? . . . Give Steele MacKaye the ghost of a chance and he will come out all right yet. But he needs a partner who will work with him, instead of against him. Hitherto his greatest misfortunes have been his business associates. . . . I protest against killing the goose that might lay golden eggs. The adver-

^{*} In the New York Dramatic Times, June 2, '85,

tisements of the Lyceum have been cut down to five lines, and the paying public are frightened away by rumours of insolvency. With the right kind of management both the Lyceum and Dakolar could be made successful. The house was handicapped at the start by insufficient capital. If it had been advertised as largely as the Liver Pill which belongs to the same proprietor, it would now be crowded. The enterprise is being allowed to die of inanition."

"AUDIENCES INCREASE"-TOO LATE; THE THEATRE'S ROULETTE

Nine days later (May 18th), the Home Journal wrote:

"Now that there is talk of the season ending soon at the Lyceum, audiences have increased to see Dakolar and the new theatre."

A very old and perennial story in the theatre! Often the public tide may turn, favorably,—but just too late. For in the theatre there are no protective reservoirs of power against disaster. In the theatre civilisation is balanced on a roulette table, and panic is ever on tiptoe to obliterate in a moment the patient building of years.—Is the theatre, then, an instrument of national education, or not? How would our state universities and schools survive on the theatre's economic basis? Our federal government, long since, has connected its great reservoirs of wealth with a system to stem panic at the banks, but never yet at the box offices. When shall that need of civilization be recognised?

Such queries are implicit in all Anglo-Saxon theatre-history, but they are here peculiarly pertinent, with reference to this first and unique American attempt, in 1885, to combine, in MacKaye's Lyceum Theatre, the functions of a national conservatory of acting with those of an expert professional theatre, eminently educational in its ideal, while the successful launching of this institutional attempt, economic and artistic, had necessarily to depend on the thousand-sinewed resourcefulness of a single uncompromising artist.—In his brave endeavour to avert, single-handed, the breaking of the dikes of speculative panic, my father then sacrificed his financial all—not merely his own diminutive salary of thirty dollars a week (to provide for his large family), but all of his stock in the enterprise, putting the honour of his public project before his personal fortunes, knowing well that his family would gladly share any lot with their gallant captain.

STICKING TO THE JOB: "SELL ALL AND COME DOWN TO A SHANTY"

Such an action as his is also an integral link in the history of the theatre's art; for it reveals the acid test of the artist's fibre, who aims to enlist beauty in the battle for social good—the willingness, if need be, to stay poor in sticking to his real job. And so, as one of those involved, then and since, in that action, I am proud to record it here, with some words of my father's at that time. In the midst of the crisis, and just before the crash of his high hopes (in May, '85), he wrote to my mother, at Mt. Vernon:

"Dear Mollie—things are hanging by the eyelids—I dare say, will go to the dogs at any moment. I am striving to settle affairs, but it seems almost impossible. I have not drawn a cent of salary for two weeks, and I have had for all my prodigious expenses in that time just \$35. I am living on borrowed money.—Suspense is the worst. If necessary, we must sell all and come down to a shanty. I have lived long enough to learn what a despicable sham even the most ardent devotion to a great idea may be. Yet whatever comes, we will try to keep philosophic—you and I and our precious gang of youngsters. Let us care not a rap even for ruin—and so be happy together. Your own fighting—James."

FELLOW ACTORS' REGARD: HENRY MILLER; WILKIE COLLINS' SUPPORT

As in previous crises of this kind, recorded in this memoir,* the gloom of the moment was happily leavened for my father by the affectionate loyalty expressed to him by the members of his company, who now—when the theatre was announced to close on May 23rd—unanimously proffered their services to him, on the "commonwealth principle" of sharing box-office returns, dispensing with their regular salaries, in order to continue the production at least for another fortnight.†

Shortly before this (on May 10th) my father had received the following letter from a young actor who afterward was to attain high distinction as an actor-manager:

"Mr. Steele MacKaye, My dear Sir:

"Should you have any vacancy in your company, I should be pleased to hear from you. You may remember me, by my playing the principal part in Odette, at Daly's Theatre, and other leading juvenile rôles; also my being the original Herbert in Young Mrs. Winthrop at the Madison Square Theatre, which cast I left to appear with my wife (Miss Bijou Heron ‡) in your play of Hazel Kirke, immediately after Miss Ellsler's leaving the company.—Should I be fortunate enough to be under your management, my purpose would be to give you entire

* Cf. pages i, 365-366, and i, 306-307.

[†] A letter to this effect was published in the press (June 1st, '85) concerning this situation, signed by "R. B. Mantell, Kate M. Forsythe, Ed. J. Buckley and Joseph Frankau." Cf. footnote on page ii, 25.

‡ Cf. page i, 129.

satisfaction, thereby installing myself permanently in your theatre, as I am heartily tired of the demoralizing effect of travelling continually. If possible, would you kindly grant me an interview? Yours respectfully—Henry Miller."

If Dakolar had then indeed proved "another Hazel Kirke," Henry Miller might have served apprenticeship for his long aftercareer of actor-manager under the author-management of Steele MacKaye. But the cards were shuffled otherwise.—The financial difficulties of the Lyceum dragged on for settlement during two or three months. Meantime, in London, my father's old friend of his Hamlet days, Wilkie Collins, the novelist, had received overseas tidings of MacKaye's dilemmas, and had despatched a long, irate letter to the New York Tribune, under caption of "The Air and the Audience," in which he wrote:

"Is it in the pecuniary interests of a manager to consult the health and comfort of his audience by improving the atmosphere and construction of his theatre?-On the sixth of April last, Mr. Steele Mac-Kaye, author of the most popular play ever written by an American dramatist, Hazel Kirke, opened a new theatre in New York. Already indebted to Mr. MacKaye's exertions, not only as a writer but as an actor, his countrymen have now to thank him for a public service of another kind. Among other ingenious inventions, he has contrived to associate an evening at the theatre with the sanitary results of a visit to the seaside. His lucky audience breathes ozoned air, and are helped to enjoy it by means of folding chairs, arranged in groups of three and four, so that they cannot be troubled by persons pushing by to vacant seats. . . . Have these novelties-pure air, the comforts of spaciousness,-and many more, all directly contributing to public health, public comfort, and public pleasure, helped to draw audiences on their own merits? Apparently, little or nothing.-The friends of the manager urge him to increase the number of his advertisements; to mention particularly that he is the author of Hazel Kirke; in short, to seek notoriety just as much as if he were the proprietor of the hottest and dirtiest theatre on the face of the earth-the kind we pack in London, from floor to ceiling, with horridly perspiring humanity, to roar at our delightful vulgarity! . . . What is the moral of this? The truth is: in the theatre we offer no encouragement to reform."

HENRY WATTERSON: "MACKAYE CAN BETTER IRVING; HIS THEATRE— A REVOLUTION"

This comment of Wilkie Collins serves once more to emphasize the fact that what my father was attempting by his theatrical reformations in 1885, and throughout his life, was a task which only a properly organised, endowed institution could hope to compass permanently. Yet undaunted he tackled it again and again, as an unfunded individual, to whom many other leaders of forward-peering vision looked to accomplish an ideal at once scientific and characteristically American. Among such American leaders, Col. Henry Watterson—wiping from his keen quill the stormy ink of politics, to dip it for a moment in a tranquil pool of philosophy—wrote in a leading editorial of his Louisville Courier Journal (Aug. 26, '85):

"There is really no reason why the stage should not be classed among exact sciences, of which indeed it must be, and is, equally exact and exacting; and there are positively many reasons why the dramatist should be elevated out of the category of mountebanks and mountebankism, ignorant and adventurous, to which ages of prejudice, in which he has concurred and to which he has contributed, have listed him. . . . What Mr. Henry Irving is doing in England, Mr. Steele MacKaye can better and more surely do in America. The Madison Square Theatre, which is the fruit of his genius, was a revelation.—His Lyceum Theatre is in the direct line of intellectual and artistic progression, and has already laid the foundation for a revolution both in standards and in methods which it is to be hoped Mr. MacKaye will live to enjoy, as creators and inventors have not been used to enjoying the results of their own work."

In this editorial I have italicised three points: For the first,—true: "There is really no reason why the stage should not be classed among exact sciences"; but—there is every reason why it cannot be systematically developed as an exact science, as long as our civilisation ignores its grotesquely uneconomic basis. During generation after generation, editors, ministers and educators fulminate against the debased status of the stage, and forever ignore the reason for it—commercial speculation. A prime motive for the existence of this memoir is to reveal—in the true story of a battling idealist of the theatre—the basic reason for the unavoidable collapse of his nobly brief consummations.

IRVING AND KNIGHTHOOD; ENGLAND AND AMERICA; "REVOLUTION"—PROMISE AND PERIL

For the second point,—perhaps: "Steele MacKaye in America" might, in 1885, have done "better and more surely what Henry Irving" was then doing in England, if there had existed in America any such deeply entrenched following, organised in the structure of society, as existed in England; if, in short, such social and govern-

mental recognition of high public endeavours as led afterward to the knighting of Sir Henry by the crown of England had in America—not its imitation, but its democratic equivalent.

Such "stately" interventions for the cause of art—though they may often go awry and too seldom delight in honouring "honest worth" even in England—are no mere empty flourishes of an uppercrust "society." They are living survivals of an age of social education, which—more than five hundred years ago—was sufficiently sensitive to the excellences of beauty to "laureate" Geoffrey Chaucer, whose æsthetic genius revolutionised our English speech for all time: an order of society, which also, at the present time, has conferred the practical honour of a state "pension" upon William Butler Yeats, whose genius in a like art has helped to revolutionise, in our day, the aspirations of another island people and to create the Irish Free State.

And though Sir Henry Irving, with all the splendid régime of his Lyceum Theatre, is himself now no more than a noble memory; and though the genius of his excelling successor, Gordon Craig, has been too long ignored by a "royalty" of State less august than his own of Imagination; yet—despite such obvious errors—the unbroken continuity of that governmental noblesse oblige, for half a thousand years, in recognition of the reason why the immaterial achievements of genius should be honoured by the supreme head of the people, is a portent of civilisation not to be looked back upon merely as an historic relique of Monarchism, but to be developed and excelled by the forward-searching vision of emerging Democracy. Otherwise shall the decay of "a people without vision" eat out the perishable heart of our own nation, even according to the all-wise proverb.

In New York of the Eighteen-Eighties, then, Steele MacKaye had not the same forces of folk education to utilise which Henry Irving had in England. But turning once more to Watterson on MacKaye's theatre, even after forty years, his words may be quoted with reality: "The Lyceum Theatre—in the direct line of intellectual and artistic progression—has laid the foundation for a revolution both in standards and in methods." And though Steele MacKaye did not "live to enjoy it as a creator enjoying the results of his own work," yet that revolution, which he began in America with his daring pronunciamentos and launched by his labours, is even to-day forging upon its still youthful progress in the very centre of the scene of his first battles—the heart of that New York

which unimaginably has grown in stature to become a cosmopolis of world dreams.

But in revolution is always peril, as well as promise—peculiarly in art: the peril of forgetting the goal of its projective Dream; the peril of obliterating "the Past,"—as if any valid artist's dream had ever passed; as if ever there could exist such a paradox as the discontinuity of art, except in the discontinuous thoughts of ignorance; as if this fleeting To-day itself had any other reality than the accumulated life of the Yesterday it becomes every instant.

GENIUS AND BIOLOGICAL MEMORY

The awareness of that continuity is progress, and only Imagination remembers awarely. So reform is simply creative remembrance, and where reform is real, History is ever the van-leader of Revolution—not its camp-follower. But to the young "ancients" of humanism, the revolutionising school of History was Biography—not Bibliography nor a Neo-Bigotry. So also, in our day it must be to both literalists and futurists, if ever they are to become the living ancients.—Old Diogenes Laertius wrote The Lives of the Philosophers for school boys—not for Ph.D.'s nor for cynics. Herodotus stood in a thousand busy market-places—a spouting fountain of delectable human dreams, pouring from the headsprings of "History." Shakespeare fed all modernity by his fecund transmutations of "the Past."

"Plutarch," writes Emerson, "cannot be spared from the smallest library; in Plato (the biographer of Socrates) you explore Modern Europe in its causes and seeds—all which its history embodies, or has yet to embody."

Yet the "revolutionists" of our "modernism," who would uniquely appropriate Emerson from an otherwise "negligible" past, have only a "latest edition" smile of derision for that "outworn Victorian age,"—which incidentally also includes both Darwin and Edison. In principle, then, all valid biographies of great men are incorrigibly "ancient" in seeking to reveal living glimpses of an arduous aspiration which those of a lesser striving would, for their own inertia, like to consider "antedated" for all genius.

Genius itself, however, is the very sap of antiquity—a welling up of the artesian heart of all fountains—an unsuppressible rillet from the roots of Ygdrasil, the old deathless Tree of Destiny. Genius lives even in its partial record, as the imbuing form lives in

the cut-off branch. Being such-wise a creative part of every man, it becomes for all men the essential link of racial remembrance.—Genius is the quickening spark of biological memory. Once seen, or felt in its burning, it permits no son to forget his father, no father his son; no family its forbears or its scions; no community or people its darkling progenitors, or its onward-dawning generations. And since Beauty only is creative, Genius—which is Beauty building—rears of itself the structure of racial remembrance—which is Art: the only living testament of earth's common religion—Love.

So the biography of an artist-genius cannot escape from a biological import which concerns all men, but perhaps peculiarly concerns indefinable urgings from within the biographer himself, when such happens to be, as I, the son of his subject-one who also has been, both in youth and in imagination, a comradely associate of his father.—One of my dearest possessions is a volume of John Fiske's Discovery of America, on the fly leaf of which my father wrote, not long before he died: "To my son and comrade, Percy Wallace MacKaye-Steele MacKaye." * However groping and halt my response to his living will in me, yet I know that the hand that writes these pages—in many a solitary midnight and silent noon-has felt within it the hand of Steele MacKaye clasped in strong comradeship; and so I have not hesitated to write, at such times, the interpretive thoughts that have risen here out of old records-in extension of his life through my own, which moves on through strangely recurrent vistas of his trail toward the same far goal.

MACKAYE'S 43RD BIRTHDAY-HIS PLAY, SCHOOL AND THEATRE CLOSE

The old records continue. On June 9th, 1885, the N. Y. Dramatic Times stated:

"The Lyceum Theatre-School closed June 6th, and is after this to be known as the New York School of Acting. This season David Belasco, Fred Williams and William Seymour have been teaching in the school, and there have been 317 applicants for admission as pupils, next season. . . . It is stated that Belasco and Sargent will manage the school next year without Steele MacKaye."

On Saturday, June 6th, Dakolar closed at the Lyceum Theatre, after a run of exactly two months.

* Cf. page ii, 466.

[†] The date of the Dakolar closing given by Allston Brown, in his history, May 23, is an error. Cf. footnote on page ii, 20. Dakolar was not revived, but the Theatre-School continued—under names of the New York School of Acting, and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts—to the present day.—Cf., in Appendix, note by P. M-K. on "It's Continuing Function During Forty Years."

Thus, on the same day (his forty-third birthday), did two of his cherished hopes, his play and his theatre-school, pass from his control, while he stood fighting to retain some directive relationship to his theatre. On that same day, too,—from Ridgefield, Conn., where the rest of the family had gone to the country—he received this letter from his son, Will, bespeaking their comradeship, as "master" and pupil, in philosophy and the theatre's art:

"Dear Father-It is very hard to know what a fight you are having in New York, and yet be unable to help. I hope to heaven that nothing will prevent my going on the stage next autumn. If you see any chance of getting me a position in a summer company, I hope you will take advantage of it. . . . You speak of 'the poles of perceptibility and reason. - Is not reason always the first act of the mind, and is it not through reason that we attain perception? . . . You say the pole of perceptibility 'supplies the element of intelligence to the life of the being.' . . . I can not understand how one can perceive quickly, without reasoning equally as quickly.—We perceive an object by means of our instinct, which, as you said, is 'unconscious reasoning. . . .' But the object may be such that it becomes necessary to use our conscious reasoning to arrive at a more thorough perception .-Am I right, or not? . . . Aunt Sadie sends her love, likewise all the rest. Hazel sends you a letter in original hieroglyphics. It seems to illustrate an auction sale better than anything else.—Ever your affectionate son, Will."

My brother, Will, though then but fifteen and a half, had already developed a reflective and poetic maturity very rare to one of his age. In our family circle, then and always till his early death, to us "middle-sizers," my brother Jamie and myself, he was like a younger father; and to the "youngest two," Benton and Hazel, he was assiduous, whimsically gentle, imaginatively sensitive to all their childish desires.—That year, he constructed for us a horizontal bar, between crotches of apple-boughs in the orchard. teaching us athletics while he himself alternated his "harmonic gymnastics" (taught him by my father) with Indian-club exercises and studies in Shakespearean rôles. For again we were in the "real country." During that summer of '85, and the next of '86, at Ridgefield, Conn., we boarded (in the region then called "Scottland") at the farm of Ferdinand Huber, a genial old German-American with a big-hearted Irish wife, whose place adjoined that of Mrs. Stanley Scott, who, previously, as "Miss Huntington" had been our family governess, at Stamford and at Forty-fourth Street. New York, during four years (1876-'80). For us children, those Ridgefield summers were prolonged extensions of those Elysian joys of an unspoiled New England, our ancestral habitat, which we had earlier experienced at Dublin, N. H., and at Brattleboro, Vermont.

HUBER'S FARM: CHOIR-ECHO, "TURTLE ZOO," STILT-WALKING, ETC.

In those days, Ridgefield had not yet been "discovered" by the New York summer colonists. The Hubers' farm—about half-way distant between the places where to-day Eugene O'Neill and Walter Hampden have their summer homes—was then completely surrounded by the ancient Yankeedom of the Connecticut soil. Here as at Wilder's Farm, Brattleboro, were oxen, herds of milch-cattle, fruit orchards and meadowlands, where a pristine trout-brook, fragrant with spearmint, flowed below the farm hill, along the south foot of a rocky headland of hickories and beeches, called "The Ledges." There, from its towering woods, a magical triple and quadruple echo rebounded and died sonorously away, like a deep, many-voiced choir of lost spirits, when at twilight our rhythmic cries of "Co',—bos!" called the cows home to the pasture bars. -At Brattleboro, my brother "Jamie" and I had specialised in collecting, from the brook and pond, a community of live frogs, fenced round as a home "zoo," including our locally renowned "Climber" and "Jumper"-peerless acrobats of our frog-circus. At Ridgefield, our reptilian aspirations ranged even farther afield, whence we brought home a land-and-water "aquarium" of over forty turtles, spotted and striped, "box"-shelled and horn-escutcheoned, including one giant mud-snapper, horrible with green slime and longbeaked neck, convolving like a garden-hose.—This, our craze for biological pets, was a radiation of my father's zest for all wild life, already touched upon. On his too-brief vacations, he himself entered with high enthusiasm into these hobbies of his children, as well as into our games of stilt-walking, pole-high-jumping, and feats of the horizontal bar, where Will was usually our captain.

A NEW SCHOOL PROJECT; THEATRE POLICIES: "BELONGING TO NEXT CENTURY"

But Will was shortly to leave us, to prepare for his début in my father's next play, and also to assist my mother in her valiant attempts to organise another dramatic school for my father, in lieu of the prosperous one which a more astute business sense on the part of his former assistants had just removed from his control. As, six years earlier, she had sat at dawn with the tramps in Union

Square * and solved the raising of money to launch his Madison Square Theatre, so now she devoted her chief time and thoughts to saving, if possible, another critical situation.

"All through that hot summer of '85," she has written to me, "while you children were with Aunt Sadie in Ridgefield, I haunted the closed up Lyceum Theatre with your father, who had offices there. We were again in deeps of financial misery.—While he was coping with tremendous problems in saving his theatre by reorganization, I spent most of the summer in the city, trying to work up this new school project.† I borrowed the money myself to print the circulars, also for the family at Ridgefield; and I wrote to every one connected with the school, trying to get things back to their old status. But I came soon upon a snag. Franklin Sargent refused to take part in the plan, and went on with the other school, which—originally conceived by your father and launched by him—had now become Sargent's independently. So the new plan, as a school, fell through, though it did bear fruit in a régime of private pupils conducted at our New York home, the following winter."

In an article by Hilary Bell (1899), the writer exclaims: "Steele MacKaye—unrivalled genius of the theatre: an honest man this, but belonging to the next century!" \text{\text{\text{\$}}}

At his Lyceum Theatre, we have now to note again the practical side of this theatre genius in respect to several of his policies "belonging to the next century." Not, indeed, until after nearly two generations had passed, were some of these policies, combining the ideal with the practical, to be put in practice by a professional playhouse of New York.—In the summer of 1885, the Lyceum Theatre was owned by "The New York Theatre Company." To the President of that company, on July 15th, '85, MacKaye as manager, addressed the following letter:

PROJECT OF ONE-ACT PLAYS, 1885: WASHINGTON SQ. PLAYERS, 1915

"Brent Good, Esq., Dear Sir: In response to your desire that I should state my views of the best policy to pursue in order to render the Lyceum Theatre a paying institution, I send you the following general statement:

"The Lyceum Theatre was devised and built especially for plays of the most delicate and artistic character. It was originally intended to make it a high Comedy House like the Prince of Wales in London—a theatre much smaller than the Lyceum, but the most successful

* Cf. page i, 301.

^{† &}quot;Mrs. Steele MacKaye" (wrote the N. Y. Mirror, Sept. 5, '85), "a woman of fine education and much force of character, is to be at the head of the Theatrical School of her husband, with him, next winter." ‡ Further quoted on page ii, 52.

financially in all England, because of the artistic excellence of its work. I believe that the only hope of any great or permanent success for the Lyceum will depend upon the extent to which it adheres to a policy which will distinguish it from all other theatres in the country by the dignity of its tone, and the strength, purity and polish of its Art.—The problem to solve, is how to make its entertainments popular with the mass, and at the same time attractive to the classes whose patronage bestows a permanent reputation of the highest kind. seems to me that this problem may be solved in the following manner: Make the theatre a variety house of the highest type. That is, take advantage of the popular element of variety in an entertainment, but instead of a vulgar variety, create a variety of the most elegant as well as amusing character .- Produce at every performance 4 oneact plays, or 2 one-act plays, and 1 two-act play-each of which shall be a complete contrast to the other. Their entertainment appeal should combine the form of a Broad Farce in one play, with the strong human interest of a Society or Domestic Drama in another play, together with the wit of a High Comedy, or the exquisite beauty of a Poetic costume-piece. The advantages of this general policy are:

"1st: Its novelty, which would appeal like its variety to the mass.—2nd: The opportunity it affords of keeping the house constantly noticed by the press; for instead of producing one four-act or five-act play, which takes weeks to get up, and requires a long run to make it pay, we could change the repertory of the evening by the production of a new one-act, or a new two-act piece, every two or three weeks, if advisable.—3rd: Fashionable people, who comprise a needful class of patronage, could come as late as they pleased, and yet be able to see some one, or two, of the plays from beginning to end.—4th: It is a policy which combines lightness of expense with the possibility of

the highest artistic results.

"In order to give such an entertainment, it is necessary to secure only a very small company, not more than four or five artists of established reputation, all others being engaged only for the run of the pieces in which they might appear: all subordinate parts given to the young artists of marked talent and native ability, who, for the sake of the training they might receive from me, would be willing to play for very small salaries. . . . In addition to the usual entertainments, I would inaugurate a series of Sunday evening lectures,* by Statesmen, Artists, Critics and Authors. These Lectures would not only tend to pay a goodly portion of the rent of the house, but would be sure to bring a prestige to the house, as the centre and focus of all that is most reputable and intellectual in the dramatic field, which would greatly enhance its fame throughout the country, and therefore increase its chances of pecuniary success. . . . Hoping this statement is sufficient to commend itself to your approval, I remain, Very truly vours, Steele MacKaye."

^{*} Not till more than twenty-five years later was an analogous policy first carried out in New York, at the New Theatre, when the very successful historical lectures by Prof. Brander Matthews were delivered there.

In one respect this formulation of managerial policy (the chief points of which I have here italicised) was wholly unprecedented in America. In 1885, the production of one-act plays, as a serious professional policy of the theatre's art, was unheard of. Unadopted at the time by Manager MacKaye's "President and Trustees of the New York Theatre Company," it remained in limbo for the rest of the nineteenth century.*—Not till 1915, when The Washington Square Players began their theatre-régime, performing a variety of short plays (incidentally, amongst others, a one-act Yankee fantasy, The Antick, by Steele MacKaye's son), was an analogous policy put into effect in New York City for the first time—thirty years after the letter above quoted.

"On the presentation of this letter to Messrs. Good and Mitchell," wrote Steele MacKaye, in a later report,† "a consultation followed, the result of which was a decision to reopen the Lyceum Theatre for a preliminary season as speedily as possible. To this end I was appointed General Manager of the theatre."

A TWO MONTHS' BATTLE AND VICTORY

To pilot the theatre through whirlpools of wavering faith, by compass of directive will, into its proper course of public service, a true captain was required, and that post MacKaye had claimed by right as his own. Now, after a confusion of counsels and two months of delay, his claim was granted. Thus, by midsummer, he had won his fight to retain his directorship of the Lyceum.—A week after the above letter, on July 22nd, the New York World wrote:

"The Lyceum Theatre troubles are now virtually settled. At a meeting of the stockholders and creditors on Monday, it was decided to leave the theatrical direction of the house in the expert hands of Mr. Steele MacKaye.—Mr. Brent Good, who has stood by Mr. MacKaye loyally throughout this fight, has unbounded faith in the manager's ability. . . . Mr. MacKaye said that he plans to open the house for a preliminary season in the middle of August, and intends to engage his people immediately for the regular season. He will probably make the Lyceum a comedy house."

ENTER MINNIE MADDERN; RECONSTRUCTING SARDOU'S ANDREA

During the next fortnight, a new and important histrionic factor

^{*} Sporadic performances of one-act "curtain-raisers," occasionally produced, in that interval, had, of course, nothing fundamentally in common with the above clear-cut policy.

† Nov. 4, 1885, quoted on page ii, 50.

determined the desirable early reopening of the Lyceum—as thus first reported in the *Dramatic News*, of August 4th:

"'Is it true, Mr. MacKaye, as announced, that you will reopen the Lyceum Theatre with Minnie Maddern?' 'That is true. Miss Maddern will appear here under my management three weeks from today.' 'Will the foreclosure sale interfere in any way with those arrangements?' 'Not at all.'"

Putting aside, momentarily, his proposals for a future régime of the house, in preparing now to continue it "as a Comedy Theatre," Steele MacKaye turned his discernment of high acting potentialities-which already had selected for his company young Mantell, Mason, Martinot, Allen and Mansfield-toward the distinctive gifts of another rising artist, the youthful comedienne, Miss Minnie Maddern, then not quite twenty years old, just on the threshold of her "grown-up" career, after a decade of earlier apprenticeship .--Eleven years before, at the age of nine, little Minnie Maddern * had acted, at Booth's Theatre (May 25, 1874), as Prince Arthur in Shakespeare's King John, the title-rôle of which was then played by Edwin Booth's elder brother, Junius Brutus Booth, Junior (whose wife, Agnes Booth, acted Constance). On that occasion there sat in the audience a lad of thirteen named Harrison Grev Fiske, who—as her veteran manager, in the year 1926,—told me that he still preserved the programme which he kept on that evening, when he saw her then for the first time—though he was not to meet her till years after, when my father introduced him in 1885. -After King John, in a later production, Fogg's Ferry (at the Park Theatre, May 15, 1882), Miss Maddern again appeared in New York, at the age of seventeen. At the time of these Lyceum Theatre beginnings, however, she had not yet made her fullfledged "début" in New York, as leading lady in a play written specially for her.

"In 1885," my mother has written to me, "Minnie Maddern, then a very young woman, wanted an opening in New York, both a play and a theatre; so a relative of hers said he would put more money in the Lyceum Treasury if your father would provide a play for Minnie, coach her in it, and bring her out at his theatre. This your father proceeded to do."

^{*}Born in New Orleans, corner of Baronne and Gravier Streets, Dec. 19, 1865 (as Marie Augusta Davey), Minnie Maddern made her first stage appearance, in the part of Little Fritz (in Fritz, Our Cousin German), at the age of two and a half (July 11, 1868), at Wallack's Theatre, with the first starring engagement of John K. Emmet. At Niblo's Garden, April 10, 1871, she played the Duke of York in Richard Third.

Miss Maddern had then tentatively in hand a play called Jacquette, by Jessop and Gill, but that play was laid aside, when MacKaye now definitely arranged for her appearance at the Lyceum. In conference with my father it was arranged that she should appear there, as early in the season as possible, in a new play by himself, based on the Andrea of Sardou.* This play, though like Dakolar an adaptation from the French, was—also like Dakolar—none the less, in many respects, a fresh and original creation of his own, and in this case was given by him a thoroughly American atmosphere and setting.

"Your father," Mrs. Minnie Maddern Fiske has recently written

me,† "very skilfully turned it into a play of New York."

"When it is known," wrote the N. Y. Times (Sept. 3, '85), "that Mr. MacKaye's improvements upon other versions of Andrea include the entire elimination of two important scenes in the Sardou play, it will be seen that his originality of thought is not confined to the arts of acting and mechanical invention."

Concerning this play of his, Steele MacKaye himself wrote to the Lyceum Theatre trustees: ‡

"While preparing for the début of Miss Maddern, I wrote for her the play to which I gave the title of In Spite of All, suggested by Sardou's Andrea. I entirely reconstructed and changed the original story, laying the scene in New York instead of Vienna; reducing the cast from 19 characters to 8, and making each character a type of my own selection. I also reduced the number of scenes necessary to produce the piece from six to two. In this manner I succeeded in fitting Miss Maddern with a part adapted to her individual abilities, while securing a modern Comedy Drama in keeping with the tone of the house, and I think thereby at least doubled the weekly receipts of the theatre. . . . In order, Gentlemen, that you may not suppose I was seeking only my own interests as a dramatist in doing this work, I ask permission to call your attention to the following facts:-- I have never before written a play for actor or manager, for which I did not receive a large sum of money before commencing my work, the least I ever received being \$600, in advance, and in addition a nightly rovalty larger than that I received for this play. This, however, was for work done when I was comparatively a beginner. The usual royalty for a play is \$25 per night. I have received, on some occasions.

^{*} Andrea, by Sardou, was originally produced at Paris in 1873, and afterwards was played in Russia, Germany and England, Charles Reade writing the London version.

[†] Cf. page ii, 43.

[‡] In a report by him as manager to the President and Trustees of the New York Theatre Company, Nov. 4th, 1885.

more than four times that royalty. In order, however, to facilitate the speedy opening of the Lyceum Theatre, I agreed to let Miss Maddern have the sole right to produce my play for the insignificant sum of \$10 per night, thus sacrificing over \$100 per week for a season of 40 weeks, in order to secure immediate money for the theatre."

From this statement it may be gathered that the personal aims of MacKaye were not those usually associated with theatrical management.—The titles of most of my father's plays have in themselves an autobiographic significance, in association with crises, characteristics or friendships of his own life. Such are A Radical Fool, Won at Last, Through the Dark, An Iron Will, A Fool's Errand.* The reader of this chapter may thus readily surmise why, at this dramatic juncture, he named his new play In Spite of All.—Once more, then, my father was happily, even though impecuniously, at work as author-manager-director, strenuously writing his play, midnights, while he reorganised the theatre and his company, during the daytime. But this pleasurable relief was again of brief duration.

SUDDEN EMBROGLIO; 3 "ANDREAS" AND 3 STARS; "WAR BEGUN"

Before he had signed his contract with Miss Maddern, he had been approached, as manager of the Lyceum, by the distinguished foreign actress, Madame Janish, and her manager, Frank Gardner, with a view to engaging Madame Janish to open the Lyceum season in "a new play" by Sardou. Referring to that occasion, in an interview † some weeks later, Steele MacKaye said:

"On that occasion, Madame Janish and her manager entertained me with statements regarding their play that were calculated to excite the wildest enthusiasm in the managerial breast. I was positively informed that they had secured from that great master, Sardou, a new play written especially for Madame Janish, entitled Anselma. It had never before, so they stated, been performed in this country, and Sardou himself was coming across the wide Atlantic to superintend the rehearsals. . . . Now, knowing Sardou myself personally, and knowing that no influence, however powerful, had ever yet induced him to cross salt water even to visit London, I became suspicious of the mathematical veracity of my very charming hostess and her audacious manager. I asked to see the play of Anselma, in order to judge of its merits. I was then informed that Sardou insisted that the manager who treated for this play should not be

^{*} Money Mad and Colonel Tom, are also among such titles. In Spite of All had, for a brief while in manuscript, the title—In Spite of All of Them! † The N. Y. World, Sept. 6, '85.

permitted to hear it, but must surrender his common sense in favor of a play unheard and unseen. To this I objected, and as Madame Janish did not care to appear before the middle of October, I completed arrangements for the début of Miss Maddern."

No sooner, however, had MacKaye completed these arrangements, and was fully launched on the writing of his play for Miss Maddern, than the ever-listening ears of his rivals at the Madison Square caught rumors of its nature and hastened to secure Madame Janish for themselves, announcing the production of her Sardou play, in its real identity—as another version of *Andrea!*

"Thus," continued Steele MacKaye, "it transpires that the mysterious new play by Sardou entitled Anselma was none other than the old play of Andrea, produced years ago by Miss Agnes Ethel, under the title of Agnes. This explains the unwillingness of the showman to expose his wares to me."

So arose an embroglio, soon involving three actress "stars," Mme. Janish, Agnes Ethel and Kate Claxton.

JANISH "STEALS A MARCH"; SECRET REHEARSALS AT MADISON SQUARE: MACKAYE'S "LIGHTNING COUP"

Meantime, the "showman," Frank Gardner, abetted by the astute Palmer (now manager for the Mallorys), was feverishly attempting to steal a march on MacKaye and the Lyceum, on behalf of the Madison Square; as the following from the New York Times (Aug. 30th, '85) describes:

"Mr. Frank Gardner, who has Mme. Janish's business interests in hand, proceeded at once to set his company rehearsing day and night at the Madison Square, in order to open there on Monday, August 31st. While doing so, he gave it out that the theatre would remain closed for a week and a half from August 31st, and thus threw Mr. MacKaye off his guard at the Lyceum. It had been MacKaye's intention to open there with his version of Andrea on that very Monday (to-morrow, August 31st) but, supposing he had plenty of time, he put off his preparations. . . . Mr. Gardner, however, has made such headway that he will give a dress rehearsal at the Madison Square to-night, and will produce Anselma to-morrow, Monday evening—facts very depressing for MacKaye's production at the Lyceum; for whether Anselma succeeds or fails, it will destroy the chances of any other version of the play in New York."

Steele MacKaye, however, was not to be "depressed," nor was Anselma to be produced after all on that "to-morrow, Monday eve-

ning." For on Monday afternoon the producers of Anselma were served with an injunction "on behalf of Agnes Ethel." *

As on that eve of his Dakolar opening, five months earlier, when he had lodged and fed in his theatre the almost-enjoined Mantell, embattled there against Palmer and the Mallorys, the fighting blood of Steele MacKaye was again dancing, and his mind on the qui vive. He discovered that Kate Claxton had purchased from Agnes Ethel all rights in Miss Ethel's rival version of Andrea. Miss Claxton lived in Larchmont, Conn. In those days there were no telephones. Instantly he hastened to the Grand Central Station and boarded a train for Connecticut.

"Miss Ethel had claimed," said MacKaye (in the interview quoted above), "that all versions of Andrea were an infringement upon her rights. Not desiring, myself, to outrage any right, moral or legal, I immediately sought Miss Claxton at her cottage in Larchmont, and succeeded in securing from her, to Miss Maddern, for \$5000, all the rights accorded by Miss Ethel to Miss Claxton.—Then war began, and the Madison Square was enjoined from producing Anselma."

Thus again, "face to face with Palmer" (with Janish and Gardner added), could a "dreamy and erratic artist-philosopher" of the theatre, when called upon to defend his own, nip even that perfect flower of astuteness in the bud with a whirlwind of managerial logic in action. The New York press were both staggered and jubilant at the rumor of battle, and MacKaye's action was hailed as "a lightning coup." The World wrote (Tuesday, Sept. 1st):

MADDERN'S MAGNANIMITY; MACKAYE FACES GAYLY HIS "OLD FRIEND, PALMER"

"Anselma had been extensively advertised to open last evening at the Madison Square and preparations had been completed. Shortly before the doors were to be opened, however, an injunction was served and the lights of the theatre were extinguished. A sign stated that the performance was postponed until Wednesday evening. Before then a hearing will be held, and the matter settled whether the play will go on, or be removed from the stage."

Five days later MacKaye stated in an interview: †

"The Court granted to Mme. Janish the right to produce Anselma for one week, if she gave a bond for \$5000, and paid the royalty de-

^{*} On Tues., Sept. 1, '85, the N. Y. World stated: "An injunction was issued yesterday by Judge J. J. Freedman, on behalf of Agnes Ethel Tracey against Albert M. Palmer, Frank L. Gardner and Mme. Janish, to restrain them from producing Anselma in New York."

† In the N. Y. World, Sept. 6, '85.

manded by the owner of Agnes. To produce her play Mme. Janish has been obliged to obtain permission of Miss Maddern, who, with the magnanimity of a genuine artist, has granted to Mme. Janish the opportunity to appear in advance of herself. . . . While I sincerely hope that Mme. Janish may secure the success due to her as an artist, I cannot as a manager refrain from feeling that Miss Maddern, out of sympathy, has granted rights to Mme. Janish that may seriously impair her own chances."

"'I am surprised, Mr. MacKaye,' said the reporter, 'to hear you speak so kindly of Mme. Janish, as I have heard rumours of a war to be waged against you for your audacity in securing the rights to Agnes.' . . . Here Mr. MacKaye laughed gaily. 'Yes,' said he, 'I have been much amused by reports of my threatened vengeance, but I have credited these rumours only to the sensation mongers of Union Square. Each side has struggled to get any fair advantage of the other that the courts and the honourable rules of business would permit; but whoever gets worsted in this matter will undoubtedly take off his hat in good natured respect to the superior skill of his opponent. Neither to my old friend, Palmer, nor to the graceful Mme. Janish, does Miss Maddern, or do I, entertain any other feeling than that of goodwill.'"*

"Goodwill": that was the mainspring of my father's nature—a will to good, which permeated all his social aims and relationships.— Ten years earlier, his "old friend, Palmer" had sat on packing boxes in MacKaye's Stamford porch and heard him read aloud that outstanding after-success for them both—his play, Rose Michel. Now Palmer was his most dangerous managerial rival, enthroned in a power of directorship which MacKaye himself had created and been subtly deposed from. For MacKaye, however, an honest fight forfeited no friendships.—So, though his path was constantly beset with engulfing darkness, his pilgrimage was as often brilliantly illumined by that inward lantern, his heart. His life was forever tinged with contrasts of that "Rembrandt luck," my mother has described, for the "luck" was wrought of his own being, wherein Hamlet and Mercutio were strangely twinned.

MERCUTIO'S STAR: YOUNG WITS AND GOODWILL IN THE JOUSTS OF COMEDY On this eve now of another battle of plays, his star of *Mercutio* was in ascendant—shining not as on *Dakolar's* eve, above entrenchments of bitter war, but now upon a tourney of gay wits, wherein he had gathered around him his young company of artists as boon

^{*&}quot;Of Steele MacKaye (wrote the Chicago Times, Feb. 27, '94), it must be said that few have had a like capacity for inspiring affection. He was beloved of many. His erratic temperament was more than offset by his great amiability."

companions-in-arms—the Knights and Ladies of Goodwill, called to the jousting lists of the Comedy Lyceum!

And a loyal company it was-mettled and moodily gay for the onset, and keen for their captain's signal. Among the young knights-errant were Richard Mansfield, now moody from a recent failure, now hopefully militant; Eben Plympton, zestful to act again, as at the premier of Hazel Kirke, five years earlier, under the same author-director; Joseph Frankau, the Met, of that play whom its author had "written in" to that première; and dearest of all, to that author himself, his sixteen-year-old son and pupil. impatient now to win his first spurs in the rôle of Mansfield's Call Boy, under his stage-name "William Payson."—Of the ladies, the "leading" was Miss Minnie Maddern, quietly agitated by her imminent New York "début" and what of destiny might lie beyond it. From her hand there fluttered in the lists this note to her authordirector, despatched from her home in "Larchmont Manor," on "Friday":

"Dear Mr. MacKaye—Mr. Shepard * tells me that you are coming to see us soon. I anticipate with pleasure a conversation in regard to my future. My love to your wife. Sincerely—M. Maddern."

MANSFIELD AND MOODS: "FIZ! AND NO FIVE-CENT CIGARS"— "IN SPITE OF ALL!"

My mother, to whom this word of greeting is here sent, has written in her recollections, concerning the Errant Knight, Mansfield, who was then about to support Miss Maddern in his part of *Herr Antonius Kraft*, written by my father, with Mansfield's rare gift for German impersonation in mind:

"Richard Mansfield played the part of an impresario in this play, and did it wonderfully. He was at this time greatly discouraged about himself. I remember his sitting down beside me at a rehearsal. I told him how delighted I was at his acting of this part, and said that Mr. MacKaye predicted for him a brilliant future. His reply was:— 'Yes, I think MacKaye does believe in me, but he is about the only one. Nobody wants me, this side of the water. I am going over to England after this play is done.'"

A more sanguine mood, however, sparkles in the "fiz" and fellowship of this note from the "impresario" himself, sent by hand, on the "Tuesday" (Sept. 15th) of the new play's opening, from his bachelor rooms at "244 Sixth Avenue":

^{*} Cf. statement of my mother on page ii, 31.

"My dear MacKaye, I find I shall not be able to have the pleasure of supping with you to-night. I have just received a note from Watson, reminding me that I promised to sup with him. He wishes to know if you will join us?—Do! I think it would do you good. Fiz! and for once no 5c cigars! I am at work. May God bless you and bring us all a great success to-night!—Always yours, Richard Mansfield."

"Fiz," however, must "bide a wee" till after midnight for Mercutio-MacKaye, author-director of the lists on this battling eve, when after the curtain's fall there would follow the inevitable banquet to his acting troupe, "across the street at the Ashland," for (once more in the metaphors of Belasco*) "whenever Steele MacKaye dined in state, champagne flowed like water, and birds of paradise were served by an army of servants, whether MacKaye had a nickel or not."

And why not, indeed? On this opening eve, in September, when he had emerged unquelled by purgatorial summer months, why should he not welcome his friends with "birds of paradise," to share with him in the toast to his unquenchable creed: the victory of faith?—Last June, the curtain of his theatre had rung down in tragic gloom and doubt. To-night, in the glow of high comedy and hope, it would rise again—In Spite of All!

^{*} Cf. page i, 442.

CHAPTER XVIII

RADIATING NATIONAL INFLUENCES

In Spite of All—Lectures, Western Universities— New York—On Tour—Ridgefield

September, 1885—September, 1886

"SUCCESS FOR MACKAYE": MADDERN "A LITTLE RED-HAIRED GENIUS"

"HIGH COMEDY AND HOPE" WON THEIR LAURELS ON THE OPENing night. Steele MacKaye, his play, his reopened theatre and his gifted company were given unanimous welcome by audience and critics.—As Alice Clandenning and Antonius Kraft, Minnie Maddern and Richard Mansfield were provided with rôles of comedy and "character" acting which gave scope for the gamut of their striking individualities and launched both freshly on a full tide of public favour. To Mansfield's career especially this opportunity to reveal his distinctive genius was critically important, and directly led him to alter his plans for returning to Europe. From that night of September 15, 1885, he became decisively an American actor and cast in his lot and ambition with the stage of this country. To Minnie Maddern this full-fledged "début" and success were also important in strengthening her metropolitan prestige and clientele.

Under caption of "A Success for Steele MacKaye in In Spite of All" the critic of Freund's Music and Drama wrote:

"A highly cultured audience gathered once more in that prettiest of all theatres in New York-The Lyceum, so agreeable to an artistic mind, so well adapted for good comedy-when Steele MacKaye, a foremost man in the artistic world, once more gained the ear of the New York public. The interest was intense, for what created so much

stir in the world must be worth seeing. . . .

"The stamp of an original worker is on the play, and MacKaye has made a successful transposition of a French comedy into American life. All superfluous personages of the Sardou play are cut off. The devoted wife here becomes a lively, sensitive, pure-minded American girl, whose awakening to her husband's unfaithfulness is one of the finest things on the present stage; the police prefect and stage manager are here welded by MacKave into one new person-Herr Antonius Kraft, operatic impresario-the outstanding creation of the play and a very remarkable one. This creation of the impresario is uniquethe study of a human genus which preserves a soft heart under the guise of inveterate cynicism. . . . The play is beautifully put on

the stage, the home-room at Clandenning's being a rare creation of

solid comfort and æsthetic surroundings.

"Miss Minnie Maddern was on her trial and came well out of it. She is positively a little genius of a peculiar kind; at times lacking most qualities a woman of refined life should possess; at others so naturally drawing on the innermost recesses of the human heart, that she jumps suddenly above the heads of the most noted actresses. With the brush, Minnie Maddern would be a Whistler; with her acting she is a whimsical genius, who, with study, will develop into one of the brightest leaders of the stage. . . . The pretty, dainty figure of the wife—her singing by the piano "The day that you'll forget me"—is charming. In the third act, when her husband is gone and Alice exclaims—'And I have lost!'—falling insensibly to the floor, her acting is vividly intense; in the last act her despair revealed the highest dramatic power.—Nevertheless, Minnie Maddern must speak more distinctly. Mumbling, indistinct speech shows capriciousness toward an audience.

"It is with intense pleasure that I saw Richard Mansfield had come back to the American stage; here lies his career and here he is most wanted. In Steele MacKaye's new creation for him—Kraft, the German impresario—he is truly sardonic. In this outwardly imperturbable, avaracious being, full of worldly-wise saws, mixing up three languages in his conversation, always the gentleman, it is worth while to see Dick Mansfield. Impresario Kraft will live. . . . In Spite of All should send the Lyceum on its way rejoicing. It is a work to put the stamp of success on the future career of the house, which ought to be the home of refined comedy and draw audiences of a high calibre."

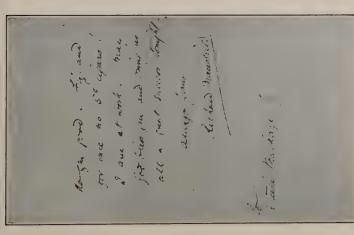
In the Sun, Nym Crinkle wrote: "In his play Mr. MacKaye has boldly shaped the Parisian elements to the exigencies of New York taste. Of all the versions of Andrea this is the best for America. In Spite of All has all the elements of popular success and, even without Miss Maddern, would hold an audience anywhere by its ro-

mantic interest and its play of incident and character.

"In Minnie Maddern we have a little actress who outrages all her art and wins all sympathies in the same rôle. She runs on, badly dressed, with a gown so short that you wonder if she is going to dance a jig. Her red hair is tangled, and she pulls at it to show you it is not a wig; she skips to the sofa, jumps upon it and puts both her feet under her as she sits down. Her voice is raucous, her pronunciation badly provincial. Her face is diminutive, like her figure, and immobile at a distance of twenty feet. Yet this little woman manages to express such a depth of pathos, to pour out the broken accents of her despair so feelingly, that she clutches the heart-strings of her audience and, despite everything, wins them to believe she is beautiful and gifted and sweet.



RICHARD MANSFIELD Near the start of his American career.



GREETINGS TO MACKAYE FROM MANSFIELD on the eve of his opening, in MacKaye's "In Spite of All," Nept. 15, 1885.

THE LYCEUM THEATRE RE-OPENS

MINNIE MADDERN (Afterwards, Mrs. Fiske) At her Lyceum Theatre début, aged 19. Mansfield's great hit as "Impresario Kraft." Steele MacKaye presents to Minnie Maddern her first intimation of "Mrs. Fiske" (pages 31, 43-44).



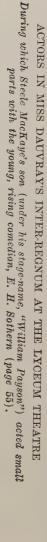
Actress-Manager at Lyceum Theatre, Nov., '85—May, '86. HELEN DAUVRAY



As "A Servant" in Bronson Howard's "One of Our Girls". WILLIAM PAYSON MACKATE (aged 17)



"Leading Juvenile" at Lyceum Theatre (1885—'86). EDWARD H. SOTHERN



MANSFIELD'S GREAT HIT IN MACKAYE'S "REMARKABLE CREATION," IMPRESARIO KRAFT LEADS TO PRINCE KARL SUCCESS

"In the casting and drill of his play, Mr. MacKaye has exercised throughout judgment of equal value. Mr. Mansfield, the impresario of the piece, has a creative hit, by town consent. The character presents a hitherto unknown person to our attention. We never saw Antonius Kraft before."

Thus the creative results of personal drill by the author-director of the Lyceum, such as Mrs. Fiske, Mantell and Belasco have attested from their own experience,* gave auspicious impetus there to several lasting reputations of the American stage. Notably this instant success of Richard Mansfield as Impresario Kraft constituted a bright change of his personal fortunes which led on to later successes in other rôles. The character of Kraft did not exist at all in Sardou's play of Andrea, but was specially written into this new version by my father with Mansfield's peculiar gifts in mind. Dramatically, it was a character-study drawn from MacKaye's own experience of foreign tongued habitués of the theatre in the French Capital-Austrian, Italian, Prussian, etc.now first introduced to the American stage. Here the foreign accent and phrasings of the polyglot Kraft met with such public favour in Mansfield's impersonation of that part, that shortly afterward, in Boston, when Archibald Gunter brought him the play of Prince Karl, Mansfield collaborated therein to embody some of these amusing foreign characteristics in the title-rôle, which he acted during several seasons.-My father's own relation to this evolution is evidenced in Mansfield's desire that MacKave should revise for him the part of Prince Karl, at the end of its first run, the following spring—as expressed by a telegram (fully quoted on page 65), in which Mansfield wired to my father:

"Want you to see Prince Karl, last performance of the season-cer-

tain parts, according your judgment, to be rewritten."

The success of In Spite of All was also of important moment to Minnie Maddern, who took the play on tour that season, with Mansfield in the cast, and later, as Mrs. Fiske, successfully revived it in after years: in 1888, at Philadelphia; in 1897, at New York; and notably, in 1889, on a road tour including Toronto, Canada, during which William Faversham enacted the part of Carol Clan-

^{*} Cf. pages ii, 43, 13-14; i, 262, 374, 471, etc. † In Boston, Mansfield had left In Spite of All, to accept Manager Stetson's more lucrative offer of the part of Koko in The Mikado.

denning, originally played by Eben Plympton. Of the original chief "quartet" (including Maddern and Mansfield), who performed this play at the Lyceum, Nym Crinkle wrote:

"Selina Dolaro, as Stella, contributes positive excellences as the prima donna, and Eben Plympton, the husband, wins good opinions nightly. With such a quartet it is not difficult to perceive, in the readjusted theatre and play, a long season of popular success."

CORINNE ROOSEVELT ROBINSON, E. H. SOTHERN, DE WOLFE HOPPER, BRANDER MATTHEWS, HOPKINSON SMITH

Thus "the prettiest house in New York" had recovered its equilibrium and prestige. The new season was brilliantly begun. Once again the New York of art and society responded to MacKaye's leadership, the distinctive "thrill" of which is recalled after many years by these words (in 1926) of President Roosevelt's sister, Corinne Roosevelt Robinson:

"Among my most delightful memories of the past are those of seeing the brilliant actor and dramatist, Steele MacKaye. A thrill, such as came with the thought of Ellen Terry and Henry Irving swept New York whenever a new play by Mr. MacKaye was announced for production. The charm and distinction of his Hazel Kirke still linger with me. So, too, in his other works, he was always the artist."

MacKaye's artistry indeed had constructed in his little theatre an ideal comedy playhouse—creative in itself of fine drama and fine acting. So the Lyceum proved a lucky nursery of high reputations for a group of young "rising professionals," amongst whom was a distinguished future rival of Mansfield. E. H. Sothern, who was then a youngster without a job and lived in a little boarding house close by the Lyceum, tells me he used to stand on the sidewalk opposite the theatre and watch the audiences going in, wondering whether he would ever be lucky enough to get a small-part engagement there. Within a few months he was to make his first hit in that very theatre.* Another youngster also watched the ingress of those Lyceum audiences.

"Dear Mr. MacKaye, will you oblige my wife and self with two seats for In Spite of All?—Yours respectfully—De Wolfe Hopper."

So wrote the future star (still shining) of burlesque comedy, who had then recently been acting *Pittacus Green* in MacKaye's *Hazel*

^{*}Cf. page 46. On Feb. 8, 1925, E. H. Sothern wrote to me: "Your father's extraordinary career covered a very important period of our theatre. How interesting the biography will be! I wish I could help."

Kirke through far western mining towns, reminiscent of which he has described his pioneering adventures, in his autobiography, Myself, When I Was Young" (1925).

"The setting of your play," wrote the artist, F. Hopkinson Smith, to MacKaye (Oct. 7, '85), "is thoroughly artistic, and the changes you have made in Sardou's text very novel and interesting."

On the same day came also this line of greeting from a young American "fellow dramatist," who later was to fill for many years a distinguished chair at Columbia University, as critic and historian of the drama:

"Dear Mr. MacKaye: Can you spare a fellow dramatist two seats for either Wednesday or Thursday night? I want to see your play. Yours truly—Brander Matthews."

HENRY ARTHUR JONES, FORBES ROBERTSON, KYRLE BELLEW, HARRISON GREY FISKE

Then but lately arrived from England, a young rising dramatist, Henry Arthur Jones, brought with him to the Lyceum three noted men of the theatre, one evening, at Steele MacKaye's invitation. After the play, my father took his invited party behind the scenes, and introduced them to Miss Maddern—with the after result that Miss Maddern altered her name to Mrs. Fiske. Concerning that auspicious bit of theatre history, Mrs. Fiske herself and Mr. Henry Arthur Jones have sent me the following recollections of their own:

"One night, at the Lyceum Theatre," writes Mrs. Fiske, "your father introduced Henry Arthur Jones to me behind the scenes, and Mr. Jones in his turn introduced the young newspaper man who happened to be in his company that evening—a Mr. Harrison Grey Fiske! . . . A relative of mine arranged with your father for his adaptation of the Sardou play, Andrea, which your father very skilfully turned into a play of New York. There was a brilliant cast and your father directed rehearsals. I remember his great kindness and courtesy—and his helpfulness to a young actress."

And from London ("19 Kidderpore Avenue, Hampstead, N. W., —Septr. 22, 1925"), the veteran English dramatist has written me:

"Dear Percy MacKaye—So far as my memory serves me, after forty very busy years, I was in New York in the autumn of 1885, for the

rehearsals of my Saints and Sinners at the Madison Square Theatre. Forbes Robertson and Kyrle Bellew went with me to the Lyceum Theatre to see Miss Minnie Maddern in your father's play. Harrison Grey Fiske was the fourth member of our party. At the end of the play, we all went round to be introduced by your father to the charming and sincere ingenue who had delighted us through the evening.—Kyrle Bellew is dead. Forbes Robertson came back to England to play Hamlet, and I also returned to my forty years' buffettings. The happiest destiny awaited Harrison Grey Fiske, who stayed in America and married Miss Minnie Maddern. I am pleased to know that, after forty years of worthy and splendid triumphs on your American stage,

she is playing Mrs. Malaprop with enormous success.

"Your father took our party behind the scenes and, after introducing us to Miss Maddern, explained to us the mechanism of his invention for transporting the orchestra to the celestial regions after every entr' acte. To our great wonder, their rostrum began to mount slowly and, with their instruments in hand, they were gently carried to the top of the building and disappeared into some unimaginable receptacle or attic. Or perhaps they were whisked into Paradise to augment the heavenly choir, until—after the curtain had fallen—they duly descended with the same solemn detachment from the routine of any known theatrical orchestra. . . . Your father struck me as a kind and manly fellow, anxious to interest his guests and to do all he could for their comfort and amusement. The impression that I retain, after forty years, is of something strong and steel grey—perhaps some unconscious association with his Christian name of Steele.—With my kindest regards, Faithfully yrs, Henry Arthur Jones."

ARTISTIC FERMENT; ORDEALS; AN EXODUS "COMME ÇI, COMME ÇA."

As formerly at the Madison Square Theatre, so now at the Lyceum, MacKaye's new theatre was a focus of artistic ferment and social éclat, which placed the dramatist-manager in a commanding position apparently very enviable. But this artistic success was again lacking in material prosperity. Having sought no pecuniary gain for himself, he was surrounded by persons who were not slow to seek it for themselves. The result once more was to sever him from the control of his own creations.—To understand this result, we must turn from public honours and acclaim, to glance behind the scenes at private revelations of his personal struggles as an artist, who must fight ceaselessly a double battle for the sustenance of his art and of his family—to both of which he was dedicated. On October 1st, 1885, he wrote from the Lyceum Theatre to Col. James MacKaye ("No. 1 Rue Pierre Charon, Paris"):

"Dear Father—After a long and bitter struggle to build this theatre, I have had a still more trying fight to keep even the little hold I

have upon it. I stick here in the hope of at last accomplishing something that will bring pecuniary as well as artistic means.—The last I have most positively obtained, and the money reward would as certainly have been ours, if it had not been for the scheming which seems to be inseparable from the money power. The story is too long to

write, so I pass at once to the present situation.

"After a long summer in which I was without salary, or even pupils, I began my new season deeply in debt—creditors with judgments against me harassing my life every instant—\$100 a week salary, \$40 of which I am obliged to divide with the creditors, who give me no peace. . . As Molly has doubtless written you, the prospects of my new school are not worth mentioning, as Mr. Sargent has carried away with him the constituency of my old school, while I was absorbed by the thousand necessary details of the theatre.—Still I propose to plod on, hoping little and expecting less, under strain of a fatigue and depression of mind incessant and merciless.—We have taken a house in town; but how we are to get money enough to move into it, or to live in it when moved, is a question so hard to answer that it makes me laugh.

"My play, In Spite of All is not only a very great artistic success, but it is a good money success with the prospect of becoming a great money success. As usual, however, because of my poverty, I have been cornered and forced to let it go for a pittance, which I have not yet received and may have to fight to get. I do not—and will not—ask of you money; but your mind, with its masterly knowledge of law, and all the ways of the business world, can do us both an inestimable service if you will come on and command the situation, as you always do when you choose. If you do not come, God only knows what the consequences will be. For me to attempt to express any of that deeper life of affection which I feel within would seem but mockery to me—and insincerity to you. So, with a hope that God may bless you and keep you in health and peace, I simply sign myself—Your son—James."

Col. MacKaye did not return to America in time to "command the situation."—To this letter of my father, the following recollections of my mother add further glimpses of an artist's problems of existence:

"That autumn of 1885," she writes, "we moved to New York, and just one episode may give you an idea of many in our lives.—We had taken the 172 Lexington Avenue house. Then there came a hitch in the delivery of the money I had borrowed to move in with. We hadn't a cent. I had told Aunt Sadie to come with you children, from Ridgefield, on a certain day; but as I couldn't get the money to release our furniture in Mt. Vernon from storage, I wrote her to stay for one more week. . . . But letters were not often delivered at the Huber Farm in Ridgefield; so Aunt Sadie packed trunks and babies, bade

Mrs. Huber good-bye, and drove to the Ridgefield station.* There she first received my letter, and had to drive back to the Hubers again, greatly to the consternation of *Madame*, who had by that time got all the beds down and the carpets up, in the process of her house-cleaning,

after their boarders' departure.

"Oh, that was a funny time! Hal and Will were there with me in the bare house on Lexington Avenue, before the furniture arrived from storage. We slept on the floor, comme çi, comme ça.—The basement kitchen was the only room habitable. There I cooked the meals while dear Will practised his voice upstairs in the big empty parlours. He had just taken his part in One of Our Girls, by Bronson Howard, which followed In Spite of All at the Lyceum.—E. H. Sothern, by the way, made his first New York mark in that play of Howard's, and the Manager, Mr. Rickaby, a dear man who died soon after, told me that young Sothern—like young Mansfield, before him—was greatly discouraged, and was ready to go back to England, when he was offered this part, in which he made a great hit, followed later by his success in The Highest Bidder under Dan Frohman's management."

OLD NEW YORK; PUBLIC-SCHOOL BOYS: SAINT GAUDENS, MACDOWELL, DAMROSCH

In this exodus from Ridgefield, here described by my mother, I was one of the children, and recall the heartache of returning to city bondage after our freedom in the wild country. It was a queer, squalid little "Grand Central" Depot which we reached in those days, through a long, pitch-dark tunnel, where billows of choking smoke smothered the faint glimmer of oil lamps, lighted by the hand of a brakeman several miles from the terminal. When we got out and emerged upon 42nd Street, the roar of the cobble stones was pierced by a shrill chorus of cabmen, chanting like flocks of grackle-birds their raucous litany of

"Cáb-cab-cab!—Cab-cab ! "Wanta-cáb, sir, cáb, sir, cáb, sir? "Wanta-cáb-cab-cab-cab-cab-cáb?"

Meanwhile they seized our hand bags and fought one-another amid fierce pell-mell, in a wholesale kidnapping of their customers. If haply we escaped them into a crowded horse-car, where the straw at our feet was yellow-ochred with tobacco-juice, we tinkled south

^{*}Concerning this decidedly old-fashioned exodus from Ridgefield, "Aunt Sadie" wrote (Nov. 26, '85) to Col. MacKaye: "The Hubers, with whom we boarded in Ridgefield, did not seem to take us for money. They were very generous—never charged anything for moving us, or our baggage, to or from the station. They would take nothing for the time James and Mary were there nor for the week Hal was with us. When we left, they gave each child a barrel of apples, and sent Mary a barrel of pears and another of potatoes."

at a whipping pace through the white-washed Park Avenue tunnel, lighted only by the air-holes overhead, till the raw-boned horses were relayed by other derelicts at 34th Street, and at 31st we dismounted, walking east one block to the tranquillity of Lexington Avenue, with its quiet-toned three-story residences half hidden by an arbour of shade trees.

A block and a half south of our high-porched new home (172 Lexington Avenue, between 30th and 31st Streets) was the house of ex-President Arthur, whose funeral soon afterward occurred there, with much pomp of black-tasselled cortége and side-whiskered diplomats as pall-bearers.-In those days, when even bank-presidents still blacked their own shoes, when tips were considered flagrantly un-American, and apartment-"flats" were rare, exotic curios, the public school system was still a cherishable institution, in a New York community which boasted no class distinctions of citizenship and comparatively few "foreign" elements outside of the "paddy" immigrants. Consequently my father, though the son of a reputed millionaire, pursued simply normal "republican" principles in placing my brother James and myself in a neighbouring public school (one locally noted for its high standing in scholarship) Grammar School No. 40, on 23rd Street, just east of Third Avenue, beyond which further eastward lay the habitat of ragpickers, scullery maids and tattered newsboys.—On 23rd Street and Fourth Avenue stood, in 1885, the Academy of Design, of which my grandfather was an early supporting "patron." Next door, north of that, stood my father's Lyceum Theatre, on the site of which had stood, till the year before, the little shop, where Bernard Saint-Gaudens personally made and sold high-class boots and shoes, hand manufactured for discriminating customers. Here he had moved from his first shop at 268 Fourth Avenue, but in 1884 this second shop was torn down to give place to my father's new theatre.

This association of the Art Academy, the Theatre, and the craftsmanly shop of Bernard Saint-Gaudens was auspiciously American and characteristic. For Saint-Gaudens' eldest son, Augustus,—after attending, some years before, that same public grammar school, around the corner,—had recently left his craft of the turning-lathe to pursue sculpture in Paris, on a path of genius which was to lead to his becoming a National Academician and our foremost American sculptor.—In 1897, I first met Saint-Gaudens on the Harvard Commencement platform in Saunders Theatre,

Cambridge, where he was receiving an honorary degree and I was delivering a commencement part at my graduation; and afterward on the Cornish, New Hampshire hills, as his neighbour, I had the inspiring privilege of his friendship. In his studio there he once said to me: "Next to being a sculptor, I would rather have been a dramatist than anything else in the world": a reminiscent desire apropos of this old propinquity of my father's theatre to his own father's shop and the grammar school around the corner.—Amongst other artist alumni, besides Saint-Gaudens, that public school boasts the distinguished musicians, Edward MacDowell and Walter and Frank Damrosch, whose father, Leopold Damrosch, has been quoted in an earlier chapter.*

HOME AND THEATRE INTERCHANGEABLE: THE EDUCATION OF DREAMS

Outside education, however, had far less influence on my father's children than the creative motives of his home and art. Far more than formal school or college could convey, my father gave me, in childhood and youth, the deeper privilege of sharing his companionship behind the scenes in the theatre and in our home circle, which in many ways he rendered an extension of that high-spirited atmosphere of art and science which always pervaded his other home, the theatre's laboratory.—Walking home from school one day with a class-mate, I recall my boy-comrade's astonishment when I asked him casually: "When does your father read his plays to you?"

"What on earth are you talking about?" he answered.

Then it first dawned on my imagination that every boy's father was not necessarily a dramatist, who normally read aloud his plays to the family after supper, or rehearsed their scenes day and night, Sundays, in the back parlour, or (what was quite as home-like) on the stage of "our own" theatre, the Lyceum. Such glimpses of my boyhood I touch upon, because my father, in his work and play, his ideas, ambitions and hopes, was so comradely a part of the life of his children that these boyish memories and their aftermath are integral with his biography. As his affectionate interest and teeming imagination inter-penetrated all our home life, so our lives were imaginatively fused with his, often in actual labours and always in dreams.

^{*} Cf. page i, 256.



HENRY C. DEMILLE (p. ii, 57)

SUCCESSORS OF STEELE MACKAYE AT THE LYCEUM THEATRE (1886). Cf. Index. DANIEL FROHMAN (p. ii, 56-57)





William Winter.

WILLIAM WINTER AND ANDREW C. WHEELER ("Nym Crinkle")

Leading Dramatic Critics of New York for a Generation (index).

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FIGHTING FOR HIS THEATRE'S ARTISTIC INTEGRITY, MACKAYE CHAMPIONS BRONSON HOWARD

In his foregoing letter to my grandfather, my father had written:

"After a long and bitter struggle to build this theatre, I have had a still more trying fight to keep even the little hold I have upon it."

This fight on his part was now to involve a disinterested struggle to preserve the very soul of his theatre, its artistic integrity of policy, affecting—in a sequence of many years—the opportunities and reputations of important fellow dramatists and actors. pivotal cause of this struggle appears to have been a certain "Mr. Mitchel," * representing the financial interests of the Tiffany Company, as chief creditors, into whose ownership the theatre had passed, the summer before, at public auction. Owing to the previous New York production of the two other versions of Andrea, the drawing-power of In Spite of All, though financially a very fair success and artistically acclaimed for its excellence, did not bring in returns sufficiently large and immediate to satisfy Mr. Mitchel, who desired to substitute a burlesque "leg show" production by E. E. Rice, entitled Evangeline. In order to prevent such a fatal reversal of all the artistic ideals which had caused him to create the Lyceum Theatre, my father sought successfully to secure instead a work of high comedy by a fellow American dramatist, Bronson Howard, and "with all the influence he could command induced Mr. Mitchel to come to terms for its production."

This whole-hearted decision of his to place the prestige, novelty and technical equipment of his own theatre at the disposal of one who was reputed to be his outstanding rival in the field of native dramaturgy, while he himself was retiring from this theatre of his dreams and labours, was made by my father without a moment's hesitation, for he admired the integrity of Howard as a man and a craftsman, and often expressed this admiration publicly and privately.

In that connection, it is of interest to note that these two leading American dramatists of their day were practically of the same age and were both born on the waters of Lake Erie. Four months after the birth of Steele MacKaye, on its eastern shore at Buffalo, Bronson Howard was born (Oct. 7, 1842) on the western shore, at

^{*} Mr. Pringle Mitchel, son of Donald Mitchel ("Ike Marvel," author of *The Reveries of a Bachelor*, etc.) was then business manager of the Tiffany Glass and Decorative Company.

Detroit. Both had been prepared at school in the east with a view to enter Yale College, but both had been prevented by illness. After an interval of ten years, both commenced their public careers within exactly three months of each other. Howard's first play, Saratoga, was produced by Daly, Dec. 21, 1870: MacKaye's first lecture in Boston occurred March 21, 1871,—his first play, Monaldi (produced by himself), January 8, 1872.

Thus, in November, 1885, both dramatists had been before the American public for about a decade and a half. At that juncture, it was enough for Steele MacKaye that Bronson Howard had written a comedy, One of Our Girls, which he considered a fine work, peculiarly well adapted to the little-theatre scale of his Lyceum. That it might, perhaps, outshine in comparison his own comedy did not enter his mind. If Howard's play should excel his, he would "take off his hat" to a rival dramatist, in the same sportsmanly spirit which he had expressed to his "old friend Palmer," as a rival manager.

RESIGNING THE LYCEUM: A REPORT THAT FOUNDED A REGIME

This characteristic act of decision was not made public at the time, nor has it been since. I deem it, however, an honour to American dramaturgy to record it here, in this (partial) text * of an official report by Steele MacKaye "To the President and Trustees of the New York Theatre Company, Nov. 4, 1885," till now never published:

"Gentlemen:

"On the 15th of last July, I addressed a letter † to Mr. Brent Good, the President of your Company. In that letter I endeavoured to formulate the ideas which, it seemed to me, should dominate the direction of the Lyceum Theatre. Reference to this document will show that the creation of an exceptionally high-class and artistic stock theatre was the aim that inspired my labour in securing the completion of the house—and that the success of the Theatre as a money-making institution would probably depend upon the fidelity of its management to the idea for which the theatre was deliberately planned.\document* The general policy of management contained in my letter of the 15th of July, was discussed with me both by Mr. Brent Good and Mr. Mitchel, these gentlemen at that time appearing most favourably impressed with the programme therein submitted. On the presentation of this letter to Messrs. Mitchel and Good, a consultation followed, the result

† Quoted on page ii, 28, 29.

^{*} Quoted also, in part, on page ii, 32.

[‡] Fidelity to that original idea, under the later enlightened management of Daniel Frohman, amply proved the prophetic accuracy of this statement.

of which was a decision to reopen the Lyceum Theatre for a preliminary season as speedily as possible. To this end I was appointed General

Manager of the Theatre. . . .

"After the production of In Spite of All, it was necessary to determine the attraction that was to follow; and then for the first time I learned, with great regret, that Mr. Mitchel had changed his mind regarding the carrying out of the programme submitted in my letter of the 15th of July last. He preferred to make the Lyceum a combination house, and as Mr. E. É. Rice had applied for the production of Evangeline at this Theatre, Mr. Mitchel expressed the desire to come to terms with that gentleman. Since in my judgment the production of that attraction was fatal to the character of the house, I used all the influence I could command to induce Mr. Mitchell to come to terms with Mr. Rickaby for the production of Mr. Howard's new play, instead of Mr. Rice's old Burlesque. I did this to preserve the tone and character of the Theatre. . . This led to the present contract with Mr. Rickaby. The production of Mr. Howard's play saves the Theatre from the loss of tone that would certainly have followed the presentation of a 'leg show' within its walls, and bids fair to bring pecuniary success as well.

"During the term of my management of the Lyceum, I have been guided by one single purpose-namely, to serve according to my best strength and ability, the interests entrusted to my hands. Though I believe there would have been a noble future for the Lyceum as a high art house, if the plans of my letter of July 15th had been carried out, and we had created for this city an ideal Company, still I readily abandon the hope I once had of realising this idea, so long as you deem it for your interests so to do.—I commenced my official work as General Manager of the Lyceum on th 20th of July. In the fulfilment of my duties as such, I have not hesitated to forego the opportunity to secure over \$4000 as royalty on my play for this season alone... In the endeavour to do my duty as your Manager, I have paid out and sacrificed at least three times the amount of money paid or due me to date from your Company. I have done this willingly, and shall never regret it, if you are satisfied with my efforts to faithfully serve your interests.—And now, gentlemen, I come to the real motive prompt-

ing this report from me to you.

"It has seemed wise to you to make the Lyceum Theatre, for the present at least, a combination House. In so doing, the principal value of my services, which grows out of my experience in organising and training stock companies of actors, and in superintending the production of plays, is suppressed. Under these circumstances, as I do not desire to accept any salary that I cannot feel is justly earned—and as I would not add one iota to the financial burden you may have to bear—I desire to tender to you my resignation as General Manager of the Lyceum Theatre, to take effect on and after Nov. 9th, next, and to express to you the assurance of my steadfast and warm goodwill. Anything that I can do at any time to further your interests, or to increase the success of your Theatre, will not only be done promptly.

but gladly.—Wishing you, Gentlemen, every possible success, I remain—Faithfully, Your obedient servant, Steele MacKaye."

"NEW YORK'S MOST PERFECT THEATRE"; MACKAYE ITS "UNRIVALLED GENIUS"

In the above excerpts I have italicised certain passages which illustrate Steele MacKaye's disinterested zeal for the honour of his theatre, for the work of a fellow-dramatist, and for the business interests of the Trustees, to whom he, as manager, was responsible. How wise his zeal and his practical action in using "all the influence he could command" to secure Bronson Howard's native comedy instead of Rice's "leg show" proved to be, both financially (for others) and artistically, "in fidelity to the idea for which the theatre was deliberately planned" by him,—the sequent highly successful history of the Lyceum Theatre, arising out of the decisive action of my father at this critical time, very fully testifies.

For that after-history involves in its record the heightened success and reputation of Bronson Howard himself, the establishment of the Belasco-DeMille partnership as playwrights with their notable successes, the repute of Helen Dauvray as a leading actress, the first rise to fame of E. H. Sothern, etc., in a long list of auspicious accomplishments, under sixteen years of management by Daniel Frohman, who (after the Rickaby-Dauvray interim) succeeded my father as manager.—Of course, it goes without saying that these latter accomplishments were achieved by brilliant gifts on the part of these artists and directors themselves; but it is equally pertinent to point out that these accomplishments not only took place upon the very principles of highly intelligent policy which my father prevented a too-hasty creditor from degrading at the start, but also could not have occurred at all but for the existence of the theatre which Steele MacKaye's dreams and his "long and bitter fight" had brought into existence as "New York's most perfect theatre" during a generation. *-Years later, Hilary Bell + wrote in the N. Y. World:

"Last night the Lyceum closed its doors for the season of 1898-99. It came out of nothingness into something that has never been excelled. No playhouse in the country is so perfect as this: a miracle of taste, making the then great houses, Daly's garish, the Union Square vulgar, and Wallack's barn-like in comparison. A dozen or more years have

^{*} Cf., in Allston Brown's *History of the New York Stage*, list of Lyceum Theatre productions, Sept., 1886, to March 22, 1902, when the theatre closed for demolition, with Annie Russell in Clyde Fitch's *The Girl and the Judge*.

† Quoted on page ii, 28.

passed, but no playhouse of later construction and decoration has come up to the Lyceum in excellence or beauty."

A LINK OF RECORD: WILLIAM PAYSON MACKAYE; JOHN RICKABY; HELEN DAUVRAY; SOTHERN'S FIRST HIT

My father resigned his management of the Lyceum Theatre on Nov. 7th, '85. A link of record between his régime there and that of Daniel Frohman is here chronicled by the following letter from my brother, Will, to William E. Payson, of Norton, Mass. (for whom Will was named and whom we always called "Uncle Will" as he had married our Uncle James Medbery's widow):

"Lyceum Theatre, New York, Nov. 17th, 1885.

"Dear Uncle Will, I have been acting under the name of William Payson in father's new play, In Spite of All, and I am now acting under the same name in Mr. Bronson Howard's new play, One of Our Girls,* which is being played at the Lyceum Theatre. . . . In Spite of All drew very fair houses while it was at the Lyceum Theatre, but was not the success it might have been, had Miss Maddern's manager been more competent and the play produced later in the season. But I believe, if they had given it the chance of a longer run, it would have succeeded well even as it was. Instead of having a stock company at the theatre, as father expected, it was turned into a combination theatre. After this decision, father could no longer in any way attend to the artistic part of the house. He has, therefore, resigned his position of manager, and the Lyceum Theatre is at present managed by Mr. John Rickaby. . . . Although it seems sad that father should lose the theatre after so much hard work, yet under the circumstances it was perhaps the best thing he could have done. He is now writing on a new play and will divide his time between this and teaching. By this means I think he will make more money than in the theatre, and we may have a little respite from suspense.—Miss Maddern is off on the road playing In Spite of All. † . . .

*"In One of Our Girls (wrote the N. Y. Post, Dec. 29, '23), which opened Nov. 10, 1885, Miss Dauvray had gathered such finished artists as F. F. Mackay, Louis James and J. W. Piggott, while E. H. Sothern, already showing a talent for comedy, was really getting his first chance there. Young Sothern had had a small part, the season before, in Charles Frohman's production of Nita's First, and afterward in Fauvetti; but at the Lyceum Theatre he had his first engagement as a regular member of a company, where his quiet, forceful acting brought him his first curtain call."—With Sothern, in a later play, Editha's Burglar (Sept., '87), my brother Will acted the assistant burglar.—One of Our Girls ran 200 nights, closing May 22, 1886, when Miss Dauvray retired as director of the Lyceum Theatre, of which then Daniel Frohman announced himself as manager, opening it on May 24, '86, with Frank Mayo, in Nordeck.

†"In Spite of All (writes William Winter, in his Life of David Belasco) was taken to Boston by Charles Frohman, Belasco going with it, as stage-manager."—"It is said (writes Paul Wilstach, in his Life of Richard Mansfield) that Herr Kraft was written in for Mansfield. He provided an amusing and at times deeply touching characterization of the Impresario, which assisted

Helen Dauvray, who starred in Bronson Howard's One of Our Girls (opening Nov. 10, '85), brought to our native stage the fresh simplicity and rather mannish directness of her unspoiled personality. Soon after that production, Manager John Rickaby died, and Miss Dauvray took over the management of the Lyceum, appearing later, during her second season there (Jan. 31, '87) as Peg Woffington in Masks and Faces. This was the long deferred version revised by its author, Charles Reade, the manuscript of which my father had had in his care ever since the time, in 1880, when Rose Coghlan had rehearsed it at the Madison Square, but had never acted it, owing to the unexpected success of Hazel Kirke.

—Soon after the production of Reade's play by Helen Dauvray, the N. Y. Mirror commented:

"Masks and Faces, somewhat changed from the traditional stage version—changed by Mr. Charles Reade himself, whose prompt copy, marked by his own pen, was kindly furnished to Miss Dauvray by Mr. MacKaye—proved to be an ensemble success."

And on May 9th, '87, Miss Dauvray herself wrote to my father concerning it:

"Dear Mr. MacKaye: I return you herewith the Charles Reade manuscript of Masks and Faces, which you so generously loaned me: Please accept my sincere thanks for the valuable notes and 'business' which it afforded me in my production. I shall continue to use them, and shall always thank you for having aided me in improving on the generally accepted version.—With my best wishes for the success of Anarchy, and of all your future undertakings, believe me, dear Mr. MacKaye, Yours most sincerely—Helen Dauvray."

Thus, a year and a half after his formal severance from the Lyceum Theatre, the helpfully directive hand of Steele MacKaye is still seen unofficially helping its policies of production. In respect also to this special play, which remains a classic of its kind, he was thus able to carry out the wishes of his old friend, Charles Reade, expressed in Reade's letter to him of April 16, 1880 (quoted on page i, 350),—a posthumous remembrance of friendship; for Reade

materially in the pleasant success of Miss Maddern and the play. In a letter (Sept. 23, '85) to a friend, Mansfield wrote: 'I am getting such splendid notices all around. I do believe the dark clouds have disappeared. And the play is quite a success. MacKaye says the next play is to be written for me at the Lyccum—he is at work on the scenario.'—But this plan came to naught. Mansfield accompanied Miss Maddern on tour, and very soon John Stetson, the Boston manager, was tempting him, and he resigned just before Christmas, and went to Boston."

himself meantime had died, April 11, 1884, in England.—In Masks and Faces, my brother, Will, acted the small part of an old servant, concerning which Nym Crinkle wrote (Feb. 5, 1887):

"Steele MacKaye never produced anything more admirable than the son who plays small parts at the Lyceum Theatre. If you saw the boy—and he is hardly eighteen years old—make up for the old servant in Bronson Howard's mess of potage, and again watched him in the old servant—Burdock, isn't it?—in Masks and Faces, you must have been amazed at the painstaking accuracy and individual illusion of the work. It is in some respects one of the most extraordinary bits of clever make-up and evenly-sustained impersonations I ever saw.—The next time you go to the Lyceum Theatre, watch Burdock, and remember that it is a mere lad playing it."

My brother Will, as "William Payson," also acted in Miss Dauvray's company, at the Lyceum Theatre, with E. H. Sothern in A Scrap of Paper (Dec. 20, '86), in Bronson Howard's Met by Chance, in Charles Reade's Masks and Faces (Jan. 31, '87), in Walda Lamar (March 7, '87), in The Love Chase (March 23, '87), and in Editha's Burglar (Sept. 19, '87), during part of which time my father retained, unofficially, an office room at the Lyceum. My own memories of this régime behind the scenes recall vividly my brother's dressing-room, where I used to try on his wigs and test his grease-paints on my own physiognomy.—Upon the close of In Spite of All at the Lyceum, in Nov., '85, after its run there of about two months, Minnie Maddern, as we have seen, continued to play it on tour during that season, with three successful revivals during the next twelve years.

A SUM OF INFLUENCES: BELASCO, HENRY DEMILLE, DANIEL FROHMAN

My father was now about to enter upon another recurrent period of touring his country as "a midland wanderer." Leaving his Lyceum Theatre, though he was to manage several more New York productions of his own, he was never again to control in New York a theatre of his own building and design, as its managing director.

"Steele MacKaye," wrote the New York Sun (May 28, 1911), "was more successful as author than as manager. Superstitious persons may be uneasy at the fact that from the failure of this dramatist as manager there began the present dynasty of theatrical magnates, who are as remote as they well can be from the dramatist, or actor, as manager."

The word "failure" appears always to be used journalistically as synonymous with the lack of personal financial gain. That lack

was certainly my father's lot. If it be "failure," however, to have created a theatre acclaimed for fifteen years as the best in New York: to have produced there within five months two new plays from his pen, rated as among the best of the period; to have been directly instrumental in launching, or firmly assisting, in these plays the acting careers of Viola Allen, Robert Mantell, John Mason, Saidie Martinot, Richard Mansfield and Minnie Maddern (all of whom were given his expert, personal drilling as authordirector) and by preserving the high standards of his own managerial policy against imminent degradation, to the resultant benefit of the dramaturgical régime of Belasco (with DeMille) and the managerial régime of Daniel Frohman (who both inherited for the second time, the policies and prestige of a theatre created by their former associate, Steele MacKaye), then the word "failure" may surely be considered far more illustrious than "success" in the historical record of my father's achievements.

"At the end of 1885," continued David Belasco (in my 1925 interview with him, already quoted *), "the Lyceum Theatre was still in debt, and Steele MacKaye was out. Virtually he alone had created it with his brain. But he was out—again. Others had stepped into his shoes.—'There it is!' he said to me. 'But I am out of it.'—Before long, Dan Frohman engaged me there as his Stage Manager."

Some of those "others" who "had stepped into his shoes" were thus David Belasco himself, Daniel Frohman, and—associatively—Henry DeMille, who also followed to the Lyceum from the Madison Square Theatre régime. Under such circumstances, it is indeed a rare and pleasant privilege to be able to record, with historic truth, the mutual goodwill which subsisted among all these parties involved. My father continued to have the friendliest relationships with his successors, and they in turn have expressed toward him and his memory a warm and loyal regard and admiration.

"IDEAL DIRECTOR FOR NEW THEATRE," MACKAYE'S "ELOQUENT PERSONALITY"; CECIL AND WILLIAM DEMILLE: "ONE OF THE NAMES
I GREW UP WITH"

In 1909, at the time when J. Pierpont Morgan, Elihu Root, and other eminent associates were dedicating in New York the much-hoped-from "New Theatre," Daniel Frohman wrote:

"Steele MacKaye would have been the ideal director of such an organisation as the New Theatre, because he combined so effectively the *On pages i, 262, 374, 443, 471-475.

imagination of the writer with high ideals, and the sound, sane knowledge of the practical mechanic.-My remembrances of him are vivid, as I am indebted to him for my first engagement in New York City as the Manager of a theatre. I had been the agent of a touring company, and he engaged me to become the business manager of the Madison Square Theatre, where I had the opportunity of noting his activities. . . . He had a most eloquent personality. In stage managing he developed to the highest degree the psychology of a play in all its varied qualities. He could convey to the actor at rehearsal an instant and vivid idea of his character, as he had also been an actor and had, at various times, played all of the principal male parts in his Hazel Kirke. His knowledge of the stage in the way of mechanism and lighting was that of the skilled artisan. . . . If Steele MacKaye had lived, he would have done wonders for the theatre, not only as an author, but from the practical side of the stage. He had in mind schemes for lighting and other effects, which anticipated, by a long time, the many results which have since been achieved by new mechanism and electric light."

David Belasco's high tributes I have already cited. From Henry C. DeMille, my father's friend and fellow-playwright, I have no direct quotation concerning him; but the sons of DeMille, who have since distinguished themselves in the field of the Motion Picture, have recently referred to their father and mine in these words of their own (1925):

"When I was a boy," Cecil B. DeMille has written me, "Steele MacKaye was one of the names I grew up with. Countless times I have heard my father allude to 'Steele MacKaye's opinion of this, and Steele MacKaye's opinion of that, in the constant reference made to him by my own father and mother. I also met your father personally, once or twice, with my father."

And William C. DeMille has written me: "During the time of my dramatic education, I have heard your father's name spoken by the men whom I look up to as the leaders of the American Stage, and have been taught to regard him as a fine tradition in the development of our theatre. Franklin H. Sargent, under whom I studied, was particularly enthusiastic over the work your father did in the development of the art of acting."

On November 8, 1885, the day after my father's resignation from the Lyceum Theatre, his dear friend and pupil, John McCullough, died at Philadelphia of insanity. This deepening shadow closed for him a period of comradeship and private tutelage which reached back to near the beginnings of his public career. INVITATION TO CORNELL: LECTURE TOUR, WESTERN UNIVERSITIES

As, in those beginnings, he had commenced his first lectures on dramatic art at the invitation of two eminent committees representing the universities of Harvard and Columbia, so now in renewing his activities in the lecture field, he received a similar invitation from Cornell (Nov. 25, 1885), signed by the President and twenty professors of that institution. In this extending influence of his ideas, by his personal presence at the principal universities of New York State, at Ithaca, Rochester, Syracuse, etc., and at others of the middle west, as well as at numerous churches and city halls, my father sowed the first seeds of dramatic art interest in that educational soil, which a generation later it was my own privilege to help in cultivating toward the present-day renaissance which pertains there. One of the signatories of that Cornell invitation to my father, in 1885-Prof. J. J. Haves, of Harvard-afterward coached me, in 1897, in the delivery of my commencement part on The Need of Imagination in the Drama of To-day.

In a long article on Steele MacKaye and his national work of education in phases of the theatre's art "to lead the way for the formation of dramatic clubs" then non-existent among university students, *The Cornell Era* wrote (Dec. 4, '85):

"Mr. MacKaye has done a great work in creating a better standard of acting on our stage, and to him is almost solely due the wide interest which has been aroused in better education in the realm of Dramatic Art. . . . In his lecture here at Library Hall, Dec. 11th, on the Philosophy of Expression, Mr. MacKaye will show the great laws underlying all art expression. As an actor of fascinating skill and power, he will illustrate his lecture by scenes from the great dramatists, wherein he will do much to bring about a new interest in the literary work of the University, and also to lead the way for the formation of a dramatic club among the students, which will help to correct the impression that our culture is being rapidly absorbed by large technical interests. A quotation from one of Mr. MacKaye's lectures bears directly on this. Mr. MacKaye says, 'The whole value of any art depends upon the way in which it reveals the nature of God; and dramatic art, as it is the first of all the arts, so it must include the study and comprehension, so far as may be, of the being of God."

To the educational effects of this lecture tour (Dec. '85—Feb. '86) a chapter in itself might well be devoted. Lacking such space, I include here the following brief excerpts of contemporary reports, as suggestive of larger implications:

"THE HARVARD IDEA"—1871 AND '85; "THE FOREMOST AMERICAN EXPRESSIONIST"

(Cornell Daily Sun): "Some years ago (1871) Mr. MacKaye was invited by President Eliot, of Harvard, to lecture before that institution, where recently Irving and Barrett have also appeared. The Harvard idea, in this regard, is a good one, and we hope our University will follow it up, after the good beginning made by Mr. MacKaye here."

(Rochester Democrat, Dec. 8, '85): "Steele MacKaye, the foremost American expressionist of to-day, said in his inspiring lecture: 'There are three ways of pantomiming: by permanent bearings of the body; by passing attitudes, and by gestures. Gestures are pantomimic verbs. They indicate doing or desire. Attitudes are adverbs modifying gestures. Bearings are adjectives qualifying the subject. . . . The mere knowledge, however, of these and kindred principles will no more make an actor, than a knowledge of the rules of rhetoric will make a poet. For such the poetic soul is necessary, and so is the spark of genius for the actor."

"PANTOMIME; OUR PSYCHOLOGICAL NATURES"; "EASE, PRECISION, HARMONY"

(Buffalo Courier): "The famous speaker, who drew his first breath in the old stone building at Fort Porter known as 'The Castle,' by his devoted efforts for the drama, has won hosts of admirers throughout the nation. . . . 'Pantomime,' he said, 'is subject to laws definite and easily learned. All in us which constitutes the element of manner is pantomimic in nature.' . . . Illustrations were given showing how we form our judgment of men from acts which are wholly voluntary. The methods of hand-shaking, listening, the acknowledgment of introduction, and many other features of social life, were taken up separately. Much stress was placed upon the repose of manner which, more than any other element, distinguishes the gentleman from the boor. . . . 'A gentleman,' he said, 'always manifests a condition of mind which reverences superior life. One of the most disgraceful elements in the social fabric to-day is lack of reverence for advanced intelligence. The mocking cynic, however fashionable, is born of self-vanity. Take this criterion by which you can measure any one:-The manhood or womanhood of any one is in direct proportion inversely to his or her vanity. . . . In motion, the elements of grace are ease, precision, and harmony."

(Utica Daily Press): "No speaker could have held more the undivided attention of his hearers. Commanding, tall, well-formed, Mr. MacKaye possesses rare dignity. His features bespeak a noble nature. His utterance, slow and impressive, carries conviction. He said: 'I wish to say something concerning expression that may assist you as teachers, scholars, or artists. . . . As a means of expressing the beautiful, the body itself should be used, rather than devices invented by

the caprices of man. . . . The whole domain of expression is as important and unchangeable as the law of gravitation. . . . The aim of all expression is impression. The more we can understand of our psychological natures, the more effortless will become our mode of expression. . . . Add soul enough to speech, and we have a Dante, a Milton, a Shakespeare. Add soul enough to pantomime, and we have a Raphael.' . . . At the close Mr. MacKaye answered numerous questions from the audience, written on slips of paper. His illustrations were simply perfection."

From "Butterfield House, Utica, Dec. 9th, '85," my father wrote to my mother, in New York:

"Dear Molly—All has gone well. . . . Remarkable enthusiasm from the public and the various committees. . . . I am tired, but always—in spite of the weariness of 'this machine'—your James."

The ministering spirit of his "Sabbatarian" forbear, old James Morison, must have hovered awfully above the pulpit at Syracuse, which held for the first time an actor-preacher, in the person of James Morrison Steele MacKaye, thus reported by The Syracuse Standard, Dec. 11:

"In his masterly lecture, at Plymouth Church, Steele MacKaye told the clergymen how to preach. . . . The trickery of the theatre he condemned as unsparingly as the sing-song of the parson. Actor and preacher alike, he said, should so sink their own personalities that there would be only the impression of the uttered words. . . . Mr. MacKaye, with a classic face not unlike Edwin Booth's, embodied in his own methods the beauties of the philosophy he advocates.—What he is doing for the art of expression is like what Herbert Spencer did for the art of composition, in his essay on 'The Philosophy of Style.' It places the art on a philosophic basis.—Throughout both afternoon and evening the speaker rose above the position of mimic to that of instructor, and held the breathless attention of his hearers, while he entered the realm of the practical and the philosophical.—At the close, a full house greeted him with immense applause."

"Immense applause"—for the illumination of a great scientific ideal, here ranked in importance with the insight of a great modern philosopher, Herbert Spencer: yet how little could his auditors conceive the poignancy of that applause in the ears of their lecturer, who knew too well the vast gulf between that clear ideal and its exemplification in an Art of the Theatre, whose Temple of Travesty is builded on Broadway.—Even then, on those applauded lecture tours, he was experiencing the keenly sentient pang of an art-

ist, whose large synthetic visions for his art were inevitably frustrated by the maladjustment of his own nature to the differing aims of a commercial world. For the third time, his upleaping aspirations and long labours of patient building had been thwarted from achieving the rightful control of his constructive imagination and directorship, through the ever-busy, competitive aims of those who visioned the theatre and its world-illumining art merely as a speculative business enterprise.—The personal suffering he felt in that inexorable defeat of his *impersonal* imaginings is suggested by an anecdote related to me by his first cousin, Millicent Alling, at whose house in Rochester he stayed over night, on that lecture tour.

GENIUS-A POIGNANT ANECDOTE; POWER OF THE FRIEZE OF PHIDIAS

"That night, after the lecture," she relates, "when your father returned with my brother Kenneth and me to our home—vividly handsome, having been highly acclaimed by the crowded meeting—he came upstairs and sat down in his room. I, of course, was beaming, very happy and proud of his wonderful success, for all the best people in town had been there, and had expressed their delight at his eloquence and charm; so I tarried a minute, to congratulate him on the triumph of his genius. 'Genius,' he answered—in such a tone! And suddenly, to my utter amazement, he turned on me a look so agonised that I gasped.—'Cousin Millie,' he said, in a low hoarse voice, 'if you know of a woman who has a young son that is a genius, tell her—tell her to take him out there in the yard and shoot him, lest he should grow up to suffer as I have had to suffer in life.' . . . I shall never forget my surprise at those strange words and the terrible sadness of his face."

This vista into his keenly sensitised nature is kindredly revealed by some words of his own, on the arts of sculpture and motion, thus quoted in a contemporary article:

"I never had an idea what scupture meant until I saw the frieze that Phidias cut for the temple of Athene. When I saw how that great artist had found the immortal point where he could put the man on horseback so that the man dominated the horse like a god—it came to me that sculpture caught the history of motion and made it immortal in repose. . . . I sat down and, in spite of myself, I actually wept when the meaning of those old marbles came in upon me—and, if I were to have been killed for it, I could not have told you what I was weeping about. We have nothing like that in modern times: one must go to Greece—back to the ancients, to get to real art. We are only copyists."

SCOTCH "AUNT SARAH": THE HORRIFYING OF "HORLICK'S MALTED MILK"

A very different mood—one of comedy—is recorded by Millicent Alling in another episode regarding my father and her own mother, his old Aunt Sarah (McKay Alling *), then about eighty—a devout, strait-laced Scotch Presbyterian, who came to visit us at New York in the winter of '85-'86. At that time, there used to frequent our house for private lessons many pupils of my father, who came from all parts of America, to study with him, at high tuition fees.—Among others, one day, there applied a young stage aspirant, niece of the rich proprietor of "Horlick's Malted Milk." By chance, when the servant ushered her into the parlour to wait for my father, she found there his old Aunt Sarah, to whom she began gushingly to confide her aspirations to study with the staid old lady's celebrated nephew.

"Oh, I perfectly adore Mr. MacKaye!" she effervesced. "He is so graceful and gifted, and my uncle is paying all my expenses to study with him to become an actress."

But suddenly the bubbling extract of Millionaire Malted Milk was frozen in her young veins by the ancient Hebridean gaze of the spare Scotch "catechist."

"My child," said Aunt Sarah solemnly, "is your mother living?"
"No," came the faint answer.

"Haven't you been taught that the stage is no place for a proper young girl? Don't you know that you are erring from the path of righteousness, when you seek this house on such an errand?"

"Goodness, Ma'am!" gasped the aspirant, "Mr. MacKaye is a respectable gentleman, isn't he?"

"Of course he is!" exploded the tart retort. "He is my nephew! But he is fascinating in his idolatry. I pray for him, night and day, that he may be restored to the fold of his ancestors. I advise you to leave at once before you see him! He will fascinate you, like all the rest!"

With this horrifying admonishment, the ancient eyes escorted the startled aspirant to the front hall, and there religiously shut the door—on a prospective twenty lessons at twenty dollars an hour. Meantime, from a chink in the arras, the fascinating nephew himself had watched the scene, too much amused to interrupt; but now he spoke with appealing histrionism of pathos:

"Aunt Sarah! What have you done! Would you take the bread out of my children's mouths?"

^{*} Born, Sarah Kay, at the Argyle, N. Y., Scotch Colony, about 1806.

"Why, James! You know I wouldn't for the world. But you know—you should be a minister!"

Of course—though Scotch Aunt Sarah did not know it—James was a minister—of a Gospel of Art, dealing with those "awful and important realities of man's immaterial and immortal nature," which Robert Burns describes in the Prologue of this memoir. In the carrying of that gospel into a new wilderness, MacKaye's eloquently reasoned "sermons" were his so-called "lectures," subtly illustrated—through "an organism flowing with the lambent freedom of a serpent"—by charming embodiments of philosophy.

MARY SHAW: "THE INFLUENCE THAT ILLUMINATED ALL MY STRIVINGS"

The influence of those lectures upon the lives and careers of very many persons, lay and professional, during a generation of auditors, is a reflex of my father's personality impossible adequately to record, but it is one which has entered creatively into the life of his country and of the American theatre. A suggestion of its power is summed up in this brief but significant testimony, sent to me recently by one of our most admirable actresses and artist-citizens, Mary Shaw, whose own undaunted pioneering introduced the art of Ibsen upon the American stage:

"Dear Percy MacKaye," she has written me (Nov. 8, '25), "during my first years on the stage, I heard your father give a series of talks on 'Art Expression by Gesture and Attitude.' What he told and demonstrated in those talks has been the influence that illuminated all my strivings to interpret rôles in the theatre. Years of effort and some achievement have proved to me how eternally true his 'Basic Laws' of expression are. All the deepest joy that has come to me from great sculpture, painting, and acting has been the recognition in them of the truths his genius made so clear. . . . When your daughter, Arvia, made her first appearance on the public stage last week at the Comedy Theatre, New York, her graceful, noble presence and vibrant personality charmed me. How wonderful it will be, I thought, if this dear girl—blessed inheritor of the MacKaye genius in a third generation—shall come to be our future great interpreter of poetic and classic rôles."

So the generations touch hands in the onward-bearing of an ever-burning torch.—During the winter of '85-'86, besides lecturing, my father was engaged in teaching his private pupils at our New York home, as well as in revising and negotiating for production his play *Paul Kauvar*, originally written ten years earlier, at Brattleboro, Vermont, as *The Vagabond*. Having James O'Neill

now in mind for the chief rôle, he suggested a reading of his play, concerning which O'Neill wrote to him:



"In reply to your esteemed favour 24th, will say am not desirous of a new piece for immediate use or next season, as Monte Cristo has been very successful this season, so much so that I shall continue it next.—However, if you do not wish to have your play produced immediately, will be most pleased to hear a reading of same, making the appointment as best suits your convenience."

JAMES O'NEILL; MANSFIELD: SUPPERS; "PRINCE KARL" REVISIONS; "JEKYLL AND HYDE" TO DRAMATISE

This reading of his play to O'Neill * was to occur later, though the rôle of Paul Kauvar was to be first acted not by O'Neill but by MacKaye himself. Meantime his comradely relations with another leading actor, Richard Mansfield, were to lead MacKaye momentarily to set aside Paul Kauvar and to come almost to the point of dramatising for Mansfield the story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, by Robert Louis Stevenson.

This bit of behind-the-scenes history is preluded by these four notes from Mansfield (in late March and April of '86), gaily redolent of breakfasts and after-theatre suppers, shared by their mutual friends, Gen. George Sheridan, and that ubiquitous first-nighter and clubman, Col. Tom Ochiltree "of the Hoffman House," for whom my father later named a play of his.

^{*}Of this reading the Philadelphia Record wrote, Feb. 19, '88; "Paul Kauvar was read by its author, more than a year ago, to James O'Neill, Louis Aldrich and others. Aldrich thereupon offered \$8,000 for it. MacKaye wanted \$10,000, which was more than Aldrich would pay, so the negotiations came to an end."

("The Westmoreland, 17th St. and Union Square: Monday.")
"Dear MacKaye: Do you join Col. Ochiltree Tuesday night in a box at the Madison Square—and am I to have the pleasure of seeing you afterward to supper at the Hoffman House? I hope so!—But our friend is so fond of the truth that it is impossible for me to know when he is taking liberties with it. Let me hear from you!—Yours always, Richard Mansfield."

("Wednesday"): "My dear MacKaye, I hope you received my message this morning—sent to 172 Lexington Ave., to tell you that I was confined to my bed—sick.—Ah, my dear fellow—if I had been a little more of a 'prig' on Sunday night, and had I declined to sing—perhaps my throat would be less sore now! I have not left my room since—except to go to the theatre. Hoped to be well enough to join you this M. but impossible! I have no luck.—Always yours."

("The Victoria. Saturday.") "My dear MacKaye, I am so sorry!—Sheridan tells me I accepted an invitation to breakfast with you. If you had only sent me a line!—You know it was late, I was busy with my guests—in fact—well, what excuse can I make?—I confess I forgot and I can only ask you to forgive me. But really you ought to have reminded me. You know—'none so well as you'—what late suppers mean! It is my loss entirely. I should have liked it so much.—Forgive me and believe me, Yours always."

("R.S.V.P. Victoria Hotel. Thursday." [Apr. 15, '86]):
"My dear MacKaye, Will you come to say good-bye and take supper
with me at the Hoffman House, Saturday eve. next, at half past eleven?
—Do! Yours always—Richard Mansfield."

"To say good-bye" referred to Mansfield's leaving on the following Sunday (Apr. 18th) for an engagement in *Prince Karl* at Boston, where—by the next Tuesday—he had conceived the idea of having MacKaye dramatise *Jekyll and Hyde* for him, and wrote this hasty note:

("Parker House, Boston, Apr. 20th, 1886.")

"My dear MacKaye—I am very anxious to see you. Are you very busy, or can you come on and spend a day or two with me? Wire. Yours always sincerely—Richard Mansfield."

This note was followed, three days later, by this telegram, from Boston:

("Steele MacKaye, 172 Lexington Avenue"): "Important you should come to-morrow, Saturday. Want you to see *Prince Karl*, last performance of the season to-morrow, certain parts, according your judg-

ment, to be rewritten.* A new play to be written by you and other matters of financial importance to you. Will bear expense. Wire reply.—Richard Mansfield."

In response to this telegram, my father went to Boston and spent the week-end there at the Parker House, discussing the dramatisation of Jekyll and Hyde, in conference with Mansfield and his patron, Eben Jordan, head of the firm of Jordan and Marsh. As a result my father was asked to write his business terms in a formal proposition, which accordingly he did in the following letter from New York (April 27):

"My dear Mansfield-I have again read the story of 'Dr. J. and Mr. H.†-Its dramatisation presents difficulties which can only be overcome by the very hardest work. I do not care to undertake the task, unless I can have a fair opportunity to treat the theme in a thorough and masterly manner, and see a fair chance of securing. within a reasonable time, proper pay for first class work in this field. . . . To complete this work satisfactorily to you or myself, in time for production next season, I shall be obliged to devote myself to it, to the exclusion of other work, which brings me the immediate income necessary to support the large number of people dependent upon me. Under these circumstances, the easiest terms upon which I can undertake to write a play for any one, are as follows:—(Here follow nine articles concerning these terms.)—This gives you seven years in which to pay for the play. I write you in great haste, as I am very much pressed to finish work delayed by my visit to Boston. As delay will be damaging to both of us in this matter, I feel sure I can count on you for a speedy decision.-With sincere regards to Mr. Jordan and the warmest good wishes for yourself, I remain-Always your friend -Steele MacKaye."

It is regrettable that the business terms suggested in this letter were not satisfactory to Richard Mansfield and his patron, for my father's gifts as dramatist and producer, especially as inventor of telling effects in staging and lighting, were peculiarly adapted to

* Quoted on page 41.—The events "behind the scenes," in April, '86, never till now made known, record beginnings of the Jekyll and Hyde play idea, a year earlier than those recorded in Paul Wilstach's Life of Richard Munsfield.

[†] In 1877 (nine years before R. L. Stevenson wrote his Jekyll and Hyde), Steele MacKaye wrote a play, entitled Hyde and Seeque, with a double rôle (representing evil and good elements of character), to be played by a single actor. This rôle he assigned to Harry Beckett, in rehearsals of the play at Wallack's, in which he assigned other parts to Montague, Gilbert, Holland, Stevenson, Rose Wood, Mme. Ponisi, etc. Act I, Scene first, was laid in The Spider's Parlour: Office of Hyde and Seeque. The play, however never reached actual production, though (later) it was announced as in waiting for the Madison Square Theatre. Cf. page i, 327.

treat that weirdly imaginative theme of Stevenson for the Theatre. Moreover, the play would probably have been produced at his old theatre, the Madison Square, as Mansfield had just accepted a call from A. M. Palmer to play there, where he opened in Prince Karl on May 3rd, '86. MacKaye's proposition, however, was not accepted, and so negotiations were closed; but these tentative discussions with MacKaye concerning the play bore fruit a year later in the stage version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, which Mansfield collaborated with Thomas Russell Sullivan,—first produced at the Boston Museum, May 9, 1887, and in New York almost simultaneously with the first New York production (Christmas, '87) of Paul Kauvar, the work which, in April, '86, my father was then "much pressed to finish—delayed by the visit to Boston" to confer with Mansfield.*

MSS. READINGS, PAUL KAUVAR, OR ANARCHY: LAWRENCE BARRETT

By mid-summer, having finished this new revision of *Paul Kauvar* (originally in four acts), my father wrote from New York (July 15, '86) to my mother at Ridgefield:

"Dearest of women and precious wife: Home seems maimed without you. I hope you are getting the rest of mind and body you so greatly need.—I have revised *Paul Kauvar* into 5 acts, and feel that I have greatly improved it. . . . I still dare to hope McDonough † may come to terms with me."

A week later, he wrote to my mother again: "I am negotiating for the production of Anarchy—my new name for Paul Kauvar—with Mr. Nate Salsbury. The reading of my play has produced a decided sensation with such experts as Salsbury, Wheeler, Fiske of The Mirror and others. There have been notices of the play already that are startling from the strength of their approval. . . . I can do nothing just now with In Spite of All, and Anarchy is my sole reliance for our support next winter. So you can understand my anxiety.—I may go to Nyack with Mr. Durant on Tuesday, and probably go to see Mr. Barrett at Cohasset on Friday. If I can consummate the arrangements I hope to, I shall go immediately to Ridgefield."

In accordance with these plans, my father went to Cohasset to see Lawrence Barrett, with important results. Barrett had re-

^{*} Just 20 years later, in memory of this earlier desire of his to secure a play from my father, Mansfield telegraphed to me a similar invitation to join him on tour and write for him an English stage version of Ibsen's Peer Gynt—a request which I had to decline, being then preparing to produce my play, Jeanne d'Arv, with Sothern and Marlowe, in Philadelphia (1906).

[†] Cf. page ii, 113. ‡ Cf. page ii, 97.

cently signed a contract to appear in productions jointly with Edwin Booth. On this Cohasset visit, my father read his play to Barret on a yacht, with Booth and other actor friends present—an event thus reported, soon afterward, in the New York World, by Nym Crinkle:

"Recently Lawrence Barrett—now joined for good work with Edwin Booth—heard that Steele MacKaye had written a great play. He invited him up to Cohasset at once and there the play was read on a yacht—where MacKaye could not be heard from the shore! I never heard a finer, more discriminating enthusiasm than Barrett's over that drama. . . . I myself was the first to hear it, and I believe that in it MacKaye has fulfilled the promise of his eventful career. I have seen him walking on his uppers while others, who never produced a thought or wrought an act, were coining hundreds of thousands out of his brains. Now, in Anarchy (or Paul Kauvar)—virile, chivalric, timely—he has written a play of scintillant action round a noble theme."

Barrett himself, after re-reading the manuscript, wrote from Cohasset, August 13, '86:—

"My dear MacKaye: I have read with great pleasure your Paul Kauvar. It is a noble work and, properly cast, adequately mounted, and earnestly acted, it will command instant and enduring success, taking its proper rank with such dramas as The Two Orphans and The Danicheffs.*—I regret that, in creating so noble a work, the exigency of the subject caused you to place the enterprise of its production out of the hands of any one person—the whole dramatis personæ demanding skilled and equal performers.† Let me add my wishes to my judgment in heralding the success of your play! Very sincerely yours, Lawrence Barrett."

COMMISSION FOR RIENZI: MATT MORGAN AND "CIVIL WAR PICTURES"

At the conference in Cohasset, Barrett was so favourably impressed by this play, that he then commissioned MacKaye to write for him a new version of the old play *Rienzi*—a commission which my father executed soon afterward, directing its production at Washington, the following December. Meantime, in New York, plans for this new production were discussed at a dinner, concerning which Winter wrote, August 28th:

"My dear MacKaye, I thank you for your exceedingly kind letter and deeply regret that I am not able to accept your invitation to dinner

* Cf. page i, 266.

[†] MacKaye realised keenly this necessity, and therefore produced the play himself, with an extraordinarily fine (and expensive!) cast of distinguished players. In the N. Y. Tribune, Feb. 5, '88, he said, in an interview: "Wallack made me an offer that was excellent pecuniarily, but we could not agree about the cast."

and the discussion of the proposed new version of Rienzi.—I am, however, glad to find myself so kindly remembered by you: and, with all good wishes, I remain Faithfully yours—William Winter."

Amid these hopeful occurrences, there was little or nothing, however, to replenish the family coffers. Until he might place his new play, my father must therefore look for a stop-gap.—During that summer, he had become acquainted with Matt Morgan, the famous scenic artist, who had come from Cincinnati to New York, on business connected with his series of War Paintings, depicting battle scenes of the Civil War in the form of a cyclorama.

Matt Morgan (Matthew Somerville Morgan) was an artist of bold and extraordinary genius in his field, one who moved great masses of his contemporaries by his vast-scale works. His large nature and artistry appealed to my father, who at once struck up with him a warm friendship. In September, 1886, Morgan's cycloramic paintings of the Civil War were shown in Cincinnati and St. Louis, and my father—because of his own intimate knowledge of the War, as well as of his personal eloquence—was asked by the backers of Morgan to prepare an oration to interpret the "War Pictures." This, in view of his pressing need for a stop-gap, he consented to do. Thus, after some brief days of vacation with his family at Ridgefield-where I recall his reading aloud to us, outdoors in the Huber Farm orchard, with zestful enjoyment of Frank R. Stockton's whimsical Casting Away of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine—my father left for a brief sojourn in the west, to prepare his historical oration on the Civil War.

AMERICA: WIDER HORIZONS: "THE WORK LEFT ME TO DO IN THIS WORLD"

Pondering this unexpected commission, which led his recollections back to his boyhood and to that gigantic crisis of the North and South in which he and his father had ardently participated; meditating, as well, another and immediate crisis in the social fabric, then seemingly involved in the public clamour against the bombthrowing "anarchists" at Chicago; he was led to a wider-horizoned view of his own play's theme, in *Anarchy*—a prospect of contemplation embracing the four winds of his ancestral America.

So, from the hour of this westward journey, his thoughts were led creatively onward through the years to come, with eddies of interruption, to the upbuilding of his culminating effort in a new form of dramaturgy and musico-scenic-production—integrally

American in its conception—the "spectatorio" of his final work, The World-Finder. Some of these thoughts—intermingled with homesickness for his family group, in the reading of "a delicious book," are implicit in this letter, which he wrote back, in pencil, to my mother, as he journeyed onward, in the joggling train, toward unknown developments in the west:

"Dear Mama—I am about to try writing a few lines, in spite of the gyrations of the car. The journey has been long and tedious, but relieved by the reading of a delicious book. All the time I have been enjoying it, I have seen you and the boys gathered about the little fire in the back parlour, listening. It has seemed almost as though I could see you laugh, and hear Hal and Will. I hope we will have some delightful evenings together over it. The name of the book is Rudder Grange (by Stockton). I tell you, so that you won't buy or read it. I want to read it to you all, myself.

"(Car has stopped. I can write more clearly.)—Do have the boys show all possible attention to poor dear father. In his old age, vexed with cares and anxieties, I fear very little is done to make his days more bright. . . . I hope I shall be able to hurry home, but cannot tell until I get to Cincinnati and see the character of the work required. If you are in immediate need of money, telegraph me, care of Joseph Arthur, Heuck's Opera House, and I will try to get an advance, and

telegraph it to you.

"While I have been travelling, I have done much thinking about the work left me to do in this world.—It seems to me as though my life could be made most valuable to my time, by devoting it (cars started) to assisting the mass of the people to understand more clearly the great problems—political and social—through the Drama. If I have health and opportunity, I mean to use the stage for the illustration of the great and living themes of the day. I feel that my skill as a dramatist is ripening, and my perceptions as a man deepening, in a manner that makes this kind of work the most inspiring to me.

"There is a battle about to be fought between Capital and Labour, that is of as much importance to the right and wholesome progress of the race, as the Civil War and the destruction of Slavery in this country. This theme, justly and powerfully treated on the stage, should give an author as high and useful a standing among the leaders of the race as can possibly be attained by the orator or essayist. . . . I have been riding through a land of homes—and it makes me realise how tired and homeless I must be until I can get some money ahead. If we could only own our own home, it would give a solid feeling to life. . . . With kisses to the dear children, always—with deeper love than you dream—your James."

At about that time occurred the five-thousandth performance of his *Hazel Kirke*. . . .

CHAPTER XIX

REDISCOVERING AMERICA

Civil War Oration; The Drama of Civilisation; Rienzi

Saint Louis, New York, Washington

Sept., 1866-Jan., 1887

SAINT LOUIS: LA SALLE AND "HUCK FINN": THE PRIMAL MISSISSIPPI

AGAIN "A MIDLAND WANDERER," HE WAS IN SAINT LOUIS.

One of the oldest of American settlements, half steeped in the sluggish serenity of the Old South, half stirred by zestful winds from the northwest prairies, Saint Louis then was still a haunt of rugged pioneers from the not distant "frontier" of elemental life, on those enormous tracts which stretched, sparsely settled, between the railroad trunk lines, leading toward the far Pacific. Through the project which had called him there, Steele MacKaye was now, for the first time since his boyhood, to touch the human fringe of that western frontier, by association in work with men who had intimately led its wild life. On former occasions, he had landed from the east in Saint Louis, only to drive from the station to the theatre, or lecture hall,—an artist-intepreter of the assimilated culture of old New England and of older Europe. Now he came on a very different errand-to interpret, for his fellow countrymen, the historic passions of a giant conflict, in which he himself had once shared—not as cultivated artist, but as elemental man.

For one of pioneer blood and imagination, merely to cross that muddy, slouching Gulliver of roiled waters, the Mississippi,—as one peers from the spider-thread span of rail-steel toward the primeval route of LaSalle with its giant clay-banks, past which in old slave days Mark Twain's Huck Finn slid by on his raft, with Jim, the nigger, at midnight: merely to glimpse that mammoth symbol of stark nature, is to gulp a huge breath of ancestral memory and to feel a cosmic America twinge the roots of one's being as never before.—Such a primal twinge I remember experiencing as I crossed those waters to Saint Louis for the first time, in the autumn of 1913, preparing to design a masque of its human meanings, for many thousands of its citizens to enact in a civic festival: a gigantic extension of my father's life, wherein I know I shared, in kind, the feelings he experienced there twenty-seven years earlier, as he

prepared to interpret the human meanings implicit in those great depictions of the Civil War by Matt Morgan.

AN AMERICAN VERESTSCHAGIN

The Matt Morgan War Pictures were first exhibited, August 30th, 1886, in Cincinnati, at Heuck's Opera House, where Mac-Kaye stopped en route to see them. The exhibition (then taken to Saint Louis) comprised twelve pictures, each 45 by 27 feet, "as large as a good-sized city lot,"—the battles of Belmont, Donaldson, Shiloh (first and second day), Vicksburg, Gettysburg, Mission Ridge, Yellow Tavern, Grant in the Wilderness, Atlanta, Five Forks, and Appomattox. Concerning these works the Cincinnati Times-Star then wrote:

"Matt Morgan's Battle Pictures are illustrative of American genius. In Europe such a gigantic series of paintings would be the work of an artist's lifetime, while the State would be asked to assist, and the completion of the mighty undertaking would be counted as a national achievement and glory.—Here a single artist begins this great task and carries it to a successful end in less than a year, creating works of art which awake delight and wonder."

During the season of 1886-'87, that cyclorama of Civil War paintings was shown throughout America. In their terror and beauty of realism, the brush-strokes of Matt Morgan's recreative imagination depicted the brutal heroism of human war with a power akin to a later Verestschagin. I remember feeling, as a boy, their shuddersome fascination: the deep blue brightness of sky, brooding above that slaughter of boy soldiers, mangled in ghastly death—their flesh brilliant and shell-torn amid the tangled yellow wheat, vivid with their life-blood and the loveliness of flowering poppies. The impression was an unforgettable vision of Man—his self-devastation amid the caressing beauty of Nature.

CIVIL WAR ORATION; SLIDING STAGES OF PERMANENT "SETS"

"The work," wrote my father to my mother, "is of much greater magnitude and importance than I had supposed, and I shall not be able to finish writing my oration before the end of the week. . . . Morgan's paintings are magnificent."

He wrote this (Sept. 13th, '86) from the Southern Hotel, Saint Louis, where he was completing his oration, for which I have found these memoranda in his handwriting:

"Pittsburg Landing—early morning the 6th April. Grant, calmly taking his coffee, hears heavy firing toward Pittsburgh. Leaving note for Buel, hastens toward the Landing—At Pittsburgh warns Lew Wallace at Crumps to move at moment's notice. . . . Three miles from Pittsburg Landing—a log meeting house, called Shiloh—held by Sherman, whose division had never yet seen engagement. Federal troops a continuous line from Lick Creek, left—to Owl Creek, right. Confederate assaults—desperate—reckless—carry Sherman's tents. . . .

"Genl. Smith, nearly 70 years old, spent mid-winter night on the ground, amidst his men—no chance to light a fire, as it would expose them to shelling by the enemy. Suffering of troops indescribable. Many frozen to death—having discarded overcoats in battle-heat—others awoke to find themselves frozen tight to the ground. . . At right of picture—accumulation of dead leaves blown up against earthworks—among the leaves—the wounded. A shell strikes tree above—falls—fires the leaves—the wounded are burned alive. . . . Charge of Genl. Smith—three colour-bearers already fallen—Corporal Twombly, Co. F, 2d Iowa, plants flag in enemy's works—Maj. Chipman falls, cheering on his men. . . .

"Buel to Grant: 'What preparation have you made for retreating?'

"Grant to Buel: 'I haven't despaired of whipping 'em yet.'

"Nelson's Division on right of Picture—at the rear of Grant—who sits in solitude—Sphinx-like—deserted by all. . . ."

In his letter to my mother (Sept. 13th) my father wrote further:

"I am driven hard to complete my work. . . . In great perplexity what to do. I am offered by the gentlemen who own the 'Matt Morgan War Pictures' \$150 a week and all expenses, if I will deliver the Oration which I am now writing to accompany the Pictures. engagement will be for 35 weeks. This would enable me to send you over \$100 a week and leave me plenty of time to write my new play. Moreover, the labour would be much less fatiguing than teaching.-I am strongly tempted to accept, as it secures ample support for the family, and relieves me from sitting on the ragged edge of anxiety. At the same time, I hate to disappoint my pupils, though they may not pay one-third of our expenses. . . . The offered engagement is exceedingly dignified. My oration and I will be starred, and everything done to make things pleasant for me. I have been very handsomely treated by these gentlemen, who are very wealthy. As I wish to give them the earliest possible answer to their offer, I wish you would telegraph me immediately what you advise."

What reply he received to this letter, I do not know. The offer of the "very wealthy gentlemen" was not, however, accepted. For at this juncture arrived another offer, involving a more creative plan, which was soon set on foot in the east.

At this time is dated a rough pen-and-ink sketch of an important

invention by my father, for sliding stages, which he appears later to have utilised, in modified form, and to have patented, in connection with his Spectatorium. Below the sketch itself (signed at the bottom by Matt Morgan, as witness) is the following note, in my father's handwriting:

"Scheme for illustrating any subject by means of a series of sliding stages, upon which the scenes, once being set, need never be struck—first proposed to Matt Morgan by Steele MacKaye, Sept. 16th, 1886."

With Matt Morgan, a month or two before in New York, Mac-Kaye had been at Staten Island, where he had conferred with Nate Salsbury and Buffalo Bill, to whom my father had made a proposal, which soon afterward led to a significant and delightful interlude in his career,

BUFFALO BILL; ERASTINA, STATEN ISLAND; "WILD WEST" IN THE MAKING

Nate Salsbury was a racy and thoroughly indigenous character, combining in his life-experience an elemental contact with American soil with an ardour for the theatre. A ranchman, an Indian fighter, a Civil War soldier, he had been also a professional actor in the Boston Museum stock company. In 1886, he was the business partner of William F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill," in managing Cody's great "exhibition" of "The Wild West."—The very first performance of that exhibition, in crude, sketchy form, had taken place, three years earlier (May, 1883), at Omaha, Nebraska. Now during the summer of '86, it had been brought east for the first time, and had just had its first eastern presentation, near New York City, at Erastina, Staten Island, where the performances, though delightfully fresh and vibrant, were still very sketchy and disjointed, wholly lacking in dramatic form—a production still very much "in the making."

It was probably at one of these Erastina performances, through Nate Salsbury, that my father first met Buffalo Bill. At once he was enthused by the thoroughly genuine qualities of the great frontiersman and his gallant exhibition of Western life—not then a "show" in the circusy-Barnum sense, but a roisterous "get-together" of authentic skill, nerve and audacity, based in true pioneer experience. It was a new species in the "entertainment" field, fresh from the soil, sui generis. In getting it up, Buffalo Bill greatly disliked to become a professional showman; but since public entertainments must either be roofed in theatres, to become

"theatrical shows," or be tented, in fields, to become "circuses," there was no alternative for the frontiersman but to adopt the showman's label, under tent or roof.

So in the conference at Staten Island between Cody, Salsbury and MacKaye, just how to preserve the authentic qualities of his "Wild West" while avoiding, as far as possible, the meretricious accompaniments of "circusing it," was a vexed problem which occupied their earnest discussion. In suggesting a solution, my father -to whom the label of "showman" was even more onerous-proposed to them the daring plan of converting the "Wild West" outdoor "exhibition" into an unprecedented form of elemental-historical drama, and producing it under a roof .- Under roof, there was then in New York City but one place large enough for so spacious a proposition, namely the old (first) Madison Square Garden, built on the site of the earlier railway terminal, between Fourth and Madison Avenues and Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Streets, where railway cars via the Park Avenue Tunnel used to disembark passengers, through Civil War days down to the mid-'Seventies.

In 1886, that great building, "the Garden,"-MacKaye suggested-would be just the place to convert into an unprecedented kind of theatre for the purpose of such a production as he had proposed. So, that August evening at Erastina, he bade them good-bye, to start soon afterward on his Western trip to Saint Louis.-Meantime, his suggestion-ignited by his usual magnetism and propelled by his eloquence—had taken fire in the imaginations of Buffalo Bill and his partner; and now, communicating with my father in Saint Louis, they urgently requested him, with their co-operation, personally to undertake his own dashing suggestion and to carry it out, as only he knew how, that very autumn in New York .- It was now already late September, but their request greatly appealed to him. In consequence, with a lightning change-about of action, he returned east to reconstruct and reinterpret the "Wild West" of America-in a new great experiment.

CREATING A NEW THEATRE FORM: A DRAMATIC PAGEANT OF PIONEERS;

In this experiment, characteristic of my father's initiative and imagination, he applied his varied experience in the art of the theatre to creating a new dramatic form definite and sequential, for the great, outdoor, sprawling "Wild West," which up to that

time had been practically devoid of imaginative or dramatic co-

This new structure, which transformed the show's chaotic medley of elements into an organic unity (at the Madison Square Garden, reconstructed for the purpose), comprised a motion-spectacle, or dramatic pageant, of American pioneer life—the very first of its kind. For this he devised a dramatic "scenario" of group pantomime, structurally accompanied and interpreted, at strategic points, by a terse-spoken "oration," amplified in tone-volume by a projective sounding-board.

By early October the undertaking for New York was definitely commissioned and launched by the "Wild West" partners, Cody and Salsbury, with Matt Morgan also associated in the work, to provide Steele MacKaye's "scenario" with gigantic scenic backgrounds, designed according to my father's directions and executed under their joint supervision.

MACKAYE'S SCENARIO, INTRODUCING SEVEN NEW FEATURES IN "WILD WEST"

On Oct. 6 and 7, '86, from Chicago (where the still unstructural Wild West "exhibition" was performing in the interval), there came to MacKaye in New York these two notes, savoring of the racy Westerner, who signs them:

"My dear Steele—I have no objection to Strobridge * making the four pictures for the Garden engagement, provided Morgan overlooks the work... Time presses and the work must not be delayed. I would suggest that the artist take his ideas from your Scenario, and you can help him to work in the detail... A blooming matinée here to-day.—Yours, Salsbury."

"My dear Steele—Yours to hand. Your Scenario is a Corker, if you can carry it out. Let me impress upon you that, in dealing with Wild West actors, you must try to get broad effects without burdening their minds too much. For, as sure as fate, they will weary of the job if the limits are too narrow. . . . At this distance, it is quite impossible for me to know just how you intend to put your ideas in force. But it seems to me that success will depend on the simplicity of action and grandeur of mounting. I am sure that neither yourself nor Morgan will miss this chance to capture the world by the exercise of the artistic taste you both possess in so great a degree. . . . Of course Morgan's salary is included in the Estimate Cody accepted. By Jesus, it ought to be! I will send the remittance to you at the

^{*} The principal theatrical lithographer, Strobridge of Cincinnati.

Union Square Hotel.—Waldron * is all right, if he don't get full at a critical time. Yours very hastily—Salsbury."

In this letter, Salsbury, acknowledges (with "yours to hand") the receipt of my father's lay-out or "Scenario" of the reconstructed "Wild West," embodying important new features, whereby it was to make thenceforward its national and international reputation during a generation. On October 7, '86, Salsbury—Buffalo Bill's partner—first set eyes on this "Scenario," which he here calls "a Corker," and comments: "It is impossible for me to know just how you intend to put your ideas in force."

From this it becomes now very clear—though it was never publicly acknowledged or recorded—that the outstanding dramatic ideas embodied thenceforth in "Buffalo Bill's Wild West" were Steele MacKaye's ideas. These ideas my father himself specificly sums up in the following paragraphs (written by him), concluding his "Scenario," which he sent to Salsbury at Chicago, in October, 1886:

"This Scenario (1st) follows the historic order in the presentation of the various features of the "Wild West."

"(2nd) It introduces new features, notably:

1—The aboriginal savage in his garb of skins, and with the weapons used before the white man appeared

2-The Emigrant trains

3-Prairie fire

4—Stampede of wild cattle

5—Life of mining camp

6—Life of fort

7-A realistic presentation of the formation and bursting of a

cyclone in the mountains, etc.

"Thus this Scenario completes the story of the perils of the pioneer, giving the fight of man with the awful, elemental forces of nature, as well as his conflict with the wild cattle of the plains.—In a word, there is a method, coherency and completeness to this story which must greatly enhance its intrinsic merits, and fit it more perfectly to the Garden as a winter indoors entertainment."

From the above statement, it becomes doubly clear that Steele MacKaye contributed in 1886 to Cody's "Wild West" Show, for the first time, all of those seven specified dramatic "new features,"

* For this Madison Square Garden production, my father invented some new cyclone and other machinery, which required a skilled workman to install and run. For this purpose he engaged the services of Nelson Waldron, an honest and capable machinist, formerly on the staff of the Madison Square Theatre. (In a recent article, Waldron has been referred to, quite erroneously, as my father's "collaborator": a term entirely inappropriate and incorrect.)

most of which were retained (though afterward in a form less dramatic and less well stage-managed) during its after career of more than twenty years, and have formed the precedent for the main features of innumerable episodes in motion pictures and "community pageants" of recent times. In short, by inventing the above scenario, my father brought into being a new type of drama, which he appropriately named *The Drama of Civilisation*.

GIGANTIC SCENES ON THEATRE "CYC"; PRAIRIE FIRE; CYCLONE MACHINERY;
RECONSTRUCTING MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

The next two months were filled for him with strenuous activities.* He divided his time chiefly between teaching his pupils in dramatic expression, at our Lexington Avenue home, and preparing the production of his *Drama of Civilisation*, which involved the interior renovation of the Madison Square Garden. Some idea of the vast scale and speed of these preparations, as well as of new inventions involved, is given in this account, written by Louis E. Cooke—then "general representative" for Adam Forepaugh, lessee of the Garden—in his *Reminiscences of a Showman* † (1915):

"Steele MacKaye, with his vast experience as an actor and dramatic producer, staged the production, and named it The Drama of Civilisation.—We had only six weeks to prepare for it, and could not take possession of the Garden until three weeks before the opening. I commenced to purchase canvas by the wagon load, so that Morgan could get his staff of artists started at once. The scenes were painted with a panoramic effect, that is, in a semicircle, not only to give a greater depth of view, but to overcome the physical obstacles encountered in the Garden, where there was no opportunity for a scene loft, or any way to handle the canvases, which measured 40 feet in height by 150 in length.

"As there had never before been anything in the way of a scenic production at the Garden, there were untold problems and difficulties to overcome. It was necessary to cut through solid walls, building temporary housings, or lofts, on the roof, to carry the ropes and blocks, to handle the heavy set pins and move the panoramas, in order to produce some of the storm and atmospheric effects. Trenches had to be dug across 27th Street, to connect with the steam plant in the old Stevens car shops. This steam was used to supply batteries of four six-foot exhaust fans, which operated one of the most effective

cyclones that has ever been staged.

"Preparatory to this, in the autumn before snowfall, men had been

† Newark Evening Star, July 1, 1915.

^{*} Some of these activities are detailed by MacKaye in a letter to Nate Salsbury, rendering "an account of my stewardship," included in the Appendix. (Salsbury is referred to in Kate Ryan's "Old Boston Museum Days," p. 95.)

sent into the forest to gather up tons of fallen leaves and small shrubbery, sufficient to last through the winter. Two or three wagon loads were used at each performance, by throwing them in front of the great drafts, created by the fans which forced air through funnels that could be turned in any direction. . . . The roar of the fans, and the rush of air turned upon the camps of miners and troopers, lifted the tents from their fastenings, causing the flags to snap in the gale. Then, when the storm was at its fury height, the leaves would be turned loose, sweeping the arena with terrific force, lifting equestrians from their horses and creating other sad havoc. . . . The light and cloud effects, the old Deadwood stage-coach striking a snag in the ravine and going to pieces, while the six mules escaped on a dead run, with only the forward wheels, dragging the driver by the reins-all this never failed to bring a tremendous final curtain-call from the great audience. . . . The production included also one of the most realistic prairie fires ever represented, when we saw a stampede of real horses. cattle, buffalo, elk and deer, dashing madly across the plains."

"This account (Mr. Cooke himself has written me in a friendly letter, 1918), does not detail the enormous amount of work which your noble father accomplished in the production and rehearsals. As a matter of fact, 'Steele' took every Indian and cowboy, separately, and led them through their parts, in pantomime, since there were few spoken words, and—as he formed the situations—he kept right on with

each epoch, while the scenery was being painted and hung."

In the history of the theatre's art, this use of an enormous movable cyclorama ("scenes painted in a semicircle") comprises a notable step in the development of modern productions; for it records probably the first use (1886) of a form of stage "cyc," as the background of a dramatic production. As an evolutionary contribution to the theatre's visual art, it comprised a kind of mutation (sprung from the old painted scenery and evolving toward the future lighting-dome *): a highly successful experiment by MacKaye, whose practical imagination probably adapted it, from his recent experience with the Civil War cyclorama, to the needs of his Madison Square Garden production. Its huge scale there (150x40 feet) was—some years later—to be greatly extended in dimension, and clarified in function, by his own development of its principle in the enormous sky "cyc" of his Spectatorium (1893), which was part of its scenic area of seventeen million cubic feet.

^{*}This use by Steele MacKaye of a canvas "cyc," in 1886, occurred about two decades before a lighting dome of plaster was first used in Germany on a small indoor scale, and before an outdoor forty-foot dome was first erected in the Harvard Stadium, Cambridge, 1917, for the stage there devised (to serve both lighting and acoustics) by Steele MacKaye's biographer for his masque, Caliban, as a background for its visions of Prospero, arranged by Robert Edmond Jones. Cf. illustration, in Epilogue.

PREPARING DRAMA OF CIVILISATION; PRESS PROBLEMS; "NO CIRCUSING!"
—STATUE OF LIBERTY DEDICATED

Dealing with these Madison Square Garden preparations, which involved also on my father's part "unbargained for" press work, while Cody and Salsbury were still on tour, the following letters reveal humanly interesting problems of management and clashes of temperament, behind the scenes:

(Dubuque, Oct. 26, '86): "My dear Steele—I realise very keenly that you have a hard task before you, and I know you will be equal to the occasion.—It seems to me, if you enter into systematic rehearsals with the blooming Indians, you will have hell, and I repeat: Give them a broad outline of what you want done, and trust them to get up to the level you set.—Your idea of working them down at Erastina is all right. I will speak to Cody. We will devise some plan to get things straightened out for you. . . . How in hell you are going to work out that cyclone I don't know, unless it is done with gauze. But for the Virgin's sake, don't have it Gauzy to the Manhattanese!—Good-bye.—Salsbury."

(New York, Sun., Oct. 31): "Dear Nate. . . . We are fortunate to have obtained so much space in the press at this time, as the political canvas-the hottest here for years-is at its climax. Besides countless political speeches, the great inauguration of the Statue of Liberty, with its interviews of celebrities from France and Washington, crowds all columns. . . . In order to perfect the dramatic picture of the Wilderness, with its dangers for the white man's advance, I have arranged to get from Forepaugh a quantity of his trained bears, antelope, moose, etc., to fill in and animate that act in the beginning. . . . In Morgan's painting of the scenes, Mrs. Custer will be announced as superintending the picture of the spot where her husband was killed. I shall also arrange for interviews with Cody and Morgan and, at the last moment, I shall give a private press-view of our machinery for the mechanical effects. . . . We are fearfully hampered by the advent at the Garden of the horse show, which has forced us to lay off most of our scenic work all this coming week. Nevertheless we shall push everything with pertinacity. . . . A word of approval, or criticism, from you would be very helpful and inspiring to your friend -Steele."

(Rock Island, Ill., Oct. 29): "My dear MacKaye—I got your synopsis yesterday and read it to Cody. As a foreshadowing of what is intended, it is all right to give it to the press. One thing, though, I most decidedly object to,—that is, dragging Mr. Barnum's name into our business. I see in it the cunning hand of Mr. Cooke, and I object most strenuously. Mr. Forepaugh is welcome to all the prestige he may gain by his connection with the Garden, but, by Jesus Christ, I don't want any circusing.—If you have not already given it to the

Press, I hope you will modify this part of it.... The Indians will be there on the 15th of Nov. Cody will be with you Tuesday. If you are cramped for time, I have told him to postpone the opening for a few days. You can't afford to risk failure by want of proper rehearsals, etc.—Yours, Salsbury."

"Madison Square Garden, New York, Nov. 1st, '86.

"My dear Salsbury—Your letter of October 29th just rec'd. As far as any work of mine for the press is concerned—I undertook it only at the request of Mr. Cooke, who frankly confessed that his slight acquaintance with that kind of work in this city made him desirous of assistance, and I could not easily prevent some mention of his employer.

. . I thank God, Cody is coming in time to take care of this business himself, as it was not a part of the work I expected or bargained to attend to. The Eternal knows I have my hands full without it!—With the best intentions in the world, a man can easily make a damned fool of himself, when trying to serve others with whom it is impossible for him to consult. . . Always sincerely—even though 'assistically'—

vours, Steele MacKaye."

(Omaha, Neb., Nov. 5th): "My dear Steele-I am afraid you took my last letter too much to heart. I can understand how easily you could be led into the pitfall that cunning Mr. Cooke set for you. And from this experience you can gather just how repugnant circus connections are to me. . . . I am sure that you and Cody will so compass your effects as to make the Custer fight go like a cyclone. . . . A word as to Cody. You will find him petulant and impulsive, but with good, crude ideas as to what can be evolved from your material. He will want to introduce (by my suggestion) the whole outfit to the audience, before the actual show begins. I think it will have a convincing effect on the people, and put them in a mood to accept without criticism the rest of the show. You know the fellow that gets the first knock-down has the best of the fight, and up go the odds in his favour.—Remember that Cody is the Star, and introduce him to the audience in a heroic and hoop-la way. . . . Don't hesitate to prod me. I can stand the goad like a bullock. It's not difficult to see that you are as thinskinned as I am bull-headed. But I don't care for that. I'll cuss you, if I like-and you can ramp and howl, if you like. It will make the 'honours easy' (when they come), and I am sure it won't abate your interest or my friendship.—Yours sincerely, Nate Salsbury."

BREAKFASTING BUFFALO BILL; MARQUIS DE MORES AND T. ROOSEVELT

Soon after the return of Buffalo Bill to New York in November, a "breakfast" in his honour, given by my father, was thus recorded in the Times:

"The distinction of a small party of guests, invited to meet the Hon. W. F. Cody, at the breakfast given to 'Buffalo Bill' calls for special notice. Among the guests were: The Hon. Roscoe Conkling, the

Marquis de Mores, Baron de Selliere, Admiral Harbaran of the French Navy, Mr. Steele MacKaye, Col. Robert Ingersoll, Hon. John Russell Young, Hon. Amos Cummings, Mr. Lawrence Jerome, Mr. Charles P. Bacon, Col. Tom Ochiltree."

The "Marquis de Mores," here mentioned—"white lily of France, born in a rose garden and raised in a hothouse"—was, in those 'Eighteen-Eighties, romanticly embroiled in cattle-raising disputes with Theodore Roosevelt in the Dakota Bad Lands. At that moment, in November, '86, Roosevelt had just been defeated in running for Mayor of New York and was about to sail for England. At this breakfast to Buffalo Bill, it is interesting to note that Roosevelt's "French Musketeer friend," the Marquis, was seated next to Roosevelt's bête noir political enemy, Roscoe Conkling.

"When T. R.," runs an anecdote of the Bad Lands,* "told how Roscoe Conkling attempted to override the New York convention, the fire began to flash in his eyes. As he straightened up—his doubled fist in the air, his teeth glittering, his eyes squinting in something that was far from a smile—he jerked out the words: 'By Godfrey! I will not be dictated to!"

PAWNEE-CHEYENEE PEACE-DANCE: "THE GREAT PLAYWRIGHT TEACHING INDIANS"

A wild savour of those far-off Bad Lands—oddly mingled with the battle-smoke of New York politics and a sporting pioneer atmosphere of Indians, ranchmen, ethnologists and millionaire Western "plungers"—pervaded the fascinating agglomeration of human interests centred in Buffalo Bill's performances at Madison Square Garden. There, in my father's rehearsals, a strange episode—intermingling a festival of primeval folklore with a function of ultra-metropolitan society—is expressed by this printed card of invitation, issued to a list of invited guests:

"Madison Square Garden, New York, Nov. 17, 1886.

"Dear Sir: The Chiefs of the Pawnee and Cheyenne Tribes of Indians, with their Bravest Bucks, will meet for the first time, off the war path, at the Madison Square Garden, Friday next, at 10.30 p.m.

. . These two tribes have always been hostile, and have never in their whole history made a treaty of peace. The traditions of their race forbid them to go into camp together, until they have gone through with the Ancient Aboriginal Ceremonies of the Nappay-oboloose-pappay, which means 'the Burial of the Hatchet.' . . . As these ceremonies will

^{*} From Hermann Hagedorn's racily told narrative, Roosevelt in the Bad Lands (Houghton Mifflin, 1921).

take place here, at the meeting of those tribes on Friday night, the Hon. W. F. Cody would be glad to afford you the opportunity of witnessing a spectacle so unique, and cordially invites you to meet a few friends, at this place, at the hour named above.—Respectfully, Steele Mac-Kaye." *

From his lair in the Hoffman House, the lionising Col. Ochiltree wrote:

"My dear Steele—The demand for the 'War Dance' is unprecedently overwhelming. I must have more tickets. On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined!—Yrs. in haste, Tom O. Don't forget all the Editors!"

Three days later, this imaginatively lively press report of another picturesque rehearsal, directed by my father, accompanied by the vast-scale scene-painting of Matt Morgan, was published under the caption: "The Great Playwright Teaching Indians":

"At the Madison Square Garden, Mr. Matt Morgan is painting a picture half a mile long and fifty feet high. Mr. Morgan puts in mountains whole, and the chief criticism made by finical art critics is, that his valleys are larger than the original.—The artist swung in a chair-scaffold, yesterday, away up in the roof of the Garden. At this dizzy height, he was painting the top of a California redwood tree. He limned a crow on one of the topmost boughs at such an airy pinnacle that the bird took fright, and almost fell into the middle distance. Then Mr. Morgan caught a rope, swung down the tree a little, painted a knot hole and put a chipmunk in it. Then he swung up again into air and covered the top of Pike's Peak with eternal whitewash. After that, he turned his attention to painting a cyclone—so natural, that he had to hold his hat on with one hand, while he employed the brush with the other.

"While he was thus blowing away houses, cattle and Indians, Mr. Steele MacKaye, the stage director and artistic adviser, entered the Garden.—Mr. MacKaye is a deservedly popular actor and dramatic author, and he will employ the knowledge obtained abroad by years of study in coaching the Wild West Show. The difficulties which he encounters can scarcely be overestimated! . . . Mr. MacKaye was soon busy holding rehearsal, but the Indians would have discouraged Delsarte himself. The Sioux did fairly well as 'light comedians'; the Pawnees appeared to grasp some idea of the duties of 'walking gentlemen'; but the Comanches were 'rotten,' and the Crows were simply 'Hams.' There was not a Piute in the Garden who was good enough to play 'utility man' in a company of 'turkey actors!' . . . Mr. MacKaye posed and drilled the Indians, the cowboys, the old settlers and the mules in picturesque groups. He tried to get the Old Settler to look as if he

^{*} Cf., on page i, 46, "Jimmy" McKay's childhood zest for Indian life.

was lying when he was telling stories.—Mr. MacKaye was vastly tired, when he got through the day's rehearsal."

On Wednesday, Nov. 27, '86, the date of the production's opening, The Spirit of the Times stated:

"Steele MacKaye's Drama of Civilisation, to be performed by Buffalo Bill and his Wild West troupe, was announced for Monday night, but was postponed until this evening, because the colossal scenic and mechanical effects were not ready."

The next day was Thanksgiving, and the ancient prandial rites of that festival—rendered patriarchal, in our household, by the presence of numerous relatives at the long dining-table, graced that year by the old Colonel, my grandfather—were invaded by a matinée at the Garden, where the family private box * (ours for that whole season) must needs be filled by clamourous youngsters. It was indeed a day of thanks-giving, for The Drama of Civilisation proved an overwhelming success, as these four selections from the press reviews suggest:

"UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS": "'WILD WEST" TRANSFORMED BY MACKAYE
TO GLOWING DRAMA"

(1)--"Those who saw Buffalo Bill's Wild West at Erastina last summer would scarcely have recognised it last night at the Madison Sq. Garden, so completely has its character been transformed by Steele MacKaye in the change from an outdoor to an indoor show. Last summer's exhibition was an odd, sketchy, haphazard picture of life in the far West. That of last night was a spectacular and spirited series of tableaus and pantomime, with far greater dramatic interest and a stronger quality of picturesqueness. The performance has been rechristened The Drama of Civilisation .- If the drama is somewhat bold and crude, the design is praiseworthy, and the swiftly changing scenes have colour, variety and novelty enough for the boldest of sensational plays. The performance is largely equestrian, and in that, as well as in the freshness of the new picture, its strength lies. . . . The huge house was crowded to the roof. Amid 9,000 people, the whole circle of boxes was gay with evening dress. Among those present were Henry Ward Beecher, Henry Bergh, Gen. Wm. Tecumseh Sherman, Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, Lawrence Jerome, Erastus Wiman, Pierre Lorillard. August Belmont.

"The Garden has been turned into a theatre, with a ground stage at the east end. The walls are painted drab; the roof covered inside with dark shingling; the beams hung with gay flags; the floor laid in fresh, hard tanbark. From its eastern edge opens the stage proper,

^{*} Cf. in Appendix ground plan of Madison Square Garden, indicating boxes, line of curtain, etc., as arranged for The Drama of Civilisation.

on which the four scenes in the *Drama of Civilisation* are cut off by a huge curtain. All the interludes are given in the circus ring, now turned into a tan plot. . . . The drama is divided into four Stage-Scenes and three Interludes. First came the Introduction by the chief Prompter * (Salsbury), perched in a box at one side of the stage; then the appearance, in turn, of the different bands and notable characters in the show. The Scenes were as follows:

"First Scene—The "Primeval Forest," with bear and antelope. Here the aboriginal Indians appeared, two tribes joining in a friendly dance, broken in upon by a hostile band, a fight ensuing, with antique weapons.

... Second Scene—a Prairie Encampment, with the old emigrant schooners and a realistic prairie fire. A Virginia Reel on horseback made a hit and was redemanded. ... Third Scene—a Cattle Ranch, where the cowboys' fun is interrupted by an Indian attack, which is beaten off at last by Buffalo Bill and a party of rescue. ... Fourth Scene—a Mining Camp in the Rocky Mountains. Here rides the 'pony express' and the Deadwood Coach is robbed, though the road-agents are captured. The camp is carried off, as a climax, by a cyclone. ... The Interludes were Indian war dances, the mounting of bucking ponies, and exhibitions of shooting by Buffalo Bill, Buck Taylor, Annie Oakley † and others."

PRIMEVAL FOREST; PRAIRIE SCHOONERS; STAMPEDE OF BUFFALOES; DEADWOOD ROBBERY; CUSTER FIGHT

(2)—"Transplanted from Erastina and reconstructed by so skilled a theatrical manager as Mr. Steele MacKaye, Buffalo Bill's exhibition has gained immensely in picturesqueness and interest as a spectacle. The vast stage holds fitting backgrounds for the novel skill, eccentricity and custom of the Indians, Cowboys, and Mexicans. . . . In the primeval woodland, moose, elk and deer wander in apparent freedom. Across the prairie pass a herd of buffaloes pursued by hunters, a long emigrant train, and finally a fire—sweeping from horizon to foreground—is met and conquered by a counter-fire. This scene ends with a mad stampede of wild animals. . . . In the concluding picture, "The Mining Camp," the pony express and Deadwood stage-robbery episodes are introduced, and the performance is ended with a cyclone which sweeps the camp out of existence. ‡ . . . All in all—a clean, novel, spectacle, certain to be extremely popular."

* This was the first appearance in the art of modern pageantry (a quarter century before its large-scale revival in America) of the dramatic functionaire known as the Chronicle-Teller. His running-caption words, written by my father, were spoken in loud tones. The "box" had a sounding-board. Eight years later, in his "Scenitorio," The World-Finder, my father himself took this part, as Author-Reader. Cf. page ii, 439.

took this part, as Author-Reader. Cf. page ii, 439.
† Annie Oakley (1860-1926), Mrs. Frank Butler, had a long, popular career as an extraordinary markswoman. Her obituary appeared in the N. Y. Times, Nov. 5, 1926. "Our Wild West outfit," said Miss Oakley, "was more like a clan than a show or a business. Even with the hundreds of men and women, cowboys and Comanches, we remained just one big family, with Buffalo Bill

at its head."

‡ A Fifth Scene, introduced soon after the opening night, was "The Last Charge of Custer"—thrillingly stage-managed.

(3)—"The glowing drama into which Mr. Steele MacKaye has woven Buffalo Bill's troupe is well illustrated by the splendid scenery which forms the background. In the vast auditorium, the actions of this great Drama of Civilisation are dramatic enough to tell the tale without any words.—In their real ferocity, the Indian war dances smack of primitive savagery at its wildest. One excellent scene of a squatter settlement, depicts the life around a log cabin of the real frontier. The shooting, lassoing, elk hunting and the whole great spectacle have wonderful

novelty and freshness."

(4)—"Considering the unwieldiness and breadth of the materials, the harmonious results achieved by Steele MacKaye in depicting the progress of American civilisation are extraordinary. . . . The great crowd of Indians and cowboys are marshalled with military precision by their leader, Buffalo Bill, amid a delightfully romantic atmosphere. Mr. Matt Morgan, with the brush, has excelled himself. His pictures of the primeval forest, the wide-reaching prairie, the mining camp and the Custer battlefield are masterpieces of scenic art and illusion. . . . The popular verdict on this new Wild West show is unqualified approval."

These happy results of his efforts provided a buoyant interlude in my father's life of all-too-frequent anxieties.

"The whole engagement," writes Louis E. Cooke,* "was a great financial and artistic success. We departed from the Garden, after paying all expenses for the winter, with a good round profit, to say nothing of the publicity secured throughout the country, as particular pains were taken to entertain all newspaper friends and celebrities who visited New York, including statesmen, artists, writers, railway magnates, etc., who took pleasure in making themselves at home. The courtly manners of Steele MacKaye, Buffalo Bill and Major Burke created warm friendships that were lasting and beneficial."

From this statement, as from one which follows—both from close associates of my father at the time—it is evident (though it has never, I think, been written yet in history) that any true historical summing up of Buffalo Bill's record and reputation must hereafter account the creative influence of Steele MacKaye as signally important and permanently contributive.—Especially gladdening to my father was the affectionate approval of his work expressed by his managerial associates, Buffalo Bill himself and his partner, Salsbury. In a letter from Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 17, '86, Salsbury wrote:

^{*}In his Reminiscences of a Showman, before quoted on pages 78 and 79, of this Chapter; also further quoted in Appendix.

BUFFALO BILL'S "EULOGY" OF MACKAYE—HIS "MASTERY OF ALL UNDERTAKEN"

"My dear Steele-I was keenly alive to the enormous task you had undertaken. . . . Now that it is all over, I want to congratulate you on the artistic hit you have made. Your friends and enemies alike join in praise of the originality and skill that you have employed in working out the problem. You have developed the fact that the show can be given under a roof, a fact worth knowing, and one that we can turn to advantage in the future. . . . Cody, in many respects, is a man of steam-engine power. In his tremendous physical power, he is the only man who can control, and keep in subjection, the various antagonistic elements of such a show. . . . I know you would be glad to read Cody's eulogy of you as a co-worker. If I were of a jealous disposition, I should think I had lost caste with him; but-through all -nothing has delighted me more than his unqualified praise of your energy and your mastery of all you have undertaken. Some day I may be able to prove to you that your zealous friendship, which shines through all the work and worry, is not forgotten by me."

MACKAYE'S TRIBUTE TO CODY, HIS "AUDACITY" IN "A NEW ENLIGHTENMENT"

The above allusion to Buffalo Bill's high estimate of MacKaye "as a co-worker" is returned in kind by the following tribute by MacKaye to Cody himself, which I find in my father's handwriting, doubtless written for publication, with the added aim of averting their mutual aversion—the "circus" label, already mentioned in Salsbury's letters:

"Many people suppose that an exhibition of the peculiar life of the 'Wild West' implies an entertainment resembling a circus performance. A visit to the Madison Square Garden will speedily convince every one that this impression is entirely erroneous. There is as wide a gulf between the 'Wild West' and the Circus as there is between a historic poem, and the advertisement of a quack medicine. . . . Mr. Codywell known to the American public as 'Buffalo Bill'—is a man possessing an amazing versatility of ability. He has distinguished himself as the greatest hunter of the Far West. He has made an imperishable record as chief of Scouts of the U.S.A. His name is inscribed upon the archives of his country at Washington-as the bravest and wisest Indian fighter of our century. He will live conspicuously in American History when the majority of the men of our day who happen to be passingly prominent are forgotten.—With all these noble achievements in real life, he has the audacity to stake several hundred thousand dollars in the realm of art, to produce in this city an entertainment that is, in its way, a new creation.

"Probably never again will our generation behold history told by the actual creators of history—with at once such realistic and poetic charm. The significant epochs that have emphasised the strides of Civilisation into the wilderness—the conquest of barbaric nature by the supreme intelligence of our race—are here presented with a picturesque force as instructive as it is inspiring. In a word, we owe Mr. Cody not only a new sensation but a new enlightenment. His exhibition rises far above the commonplace of mere amusement, and as long as he lives will doubtless stand firmly fixed in the solid ground of historic art—deserving a hearty recognition as much for the dignity of its instructive aim, as for the wonder and beauty of its artistic presentation."

In this statement, my father modestly makes no allusion to that "mastery" of his own as an artist, which Salsbury states had already won the "unqualified praise" of Cody himself.

ENLARGING THE THEATRE'S ART: CREATORS OF HISTORY RE-ENACT

In its characterisation of the unique nature of *The Drama of Civilisation*, this statement does not exaggerate, though even my father could not fully have realised then the extraordinary significances, historic and artistic, of the unique task he had so boldly conceived and successfully achieved, in co-operation with Buffalo Bill and his associates.—A perspective of forty years serves to measure more truly the altitude of that native achievement which looms, across the years, an almost solitary * peak of pioneering, enlarging horizons of our theatre's art to include the heroic elements of our American background in their variedly human reality. Not only never again was that generation of the Eighteen-Eighties to "behold history told by the actual creators of history" as in that *Drama of Civilisation*, but never through all generations to come can such history be so told again.

Moreover, until 1886, when my father's skilled powers as a producing dramatist were quickened by his imaginative ardour as a native American to create this new theatre-form for the expression of that still-unspoiled American life, the theatre's art had never till then attempted a task with like aim. For that aim was not to counterfeit such life by a melodramatic imitation of it with stage "types," but to present the authentic life itself through its living representative creators.

Nearly four decades later, in its own field, that extraordinary Motion Picture, *The Covered Wagon*, succeeded very nobly in essaying the same epic theme which my father essayed in his *Drama of Civilisation*; yet, in the nature of the case, the spiritual

^{*}There was no other dramatic work, analogous in its art form, until Steele MacKaye's Spectatorio of *The World-Finder*, in 1893.

Plate 67. Chap. XIX.



THEODORE ROOSEVELT
Rancher in Dakota Bad Lands.



WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN General, U. S. A.



WILLIAM F. CODY ("Buffalo Bill".)



STEELE MACKAYE
(In "A Fool's Errand".)

Plate 68. Chap. XIX.



GROVER CLEVELAND

President of the United States.



LAWRENCE BARRETT

In Steele MacKaye's "Rienzi".



WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS Novelist, Editor, Essayist.



CHARLES WARREN STODDARD Author of "South Sea Idylls".

(Index.)

reality of the Drama was lacking in the Motion Picture. In spite of the millions expended on its picturisation, the inevitable modernity and sophistication of the "movie" actor pervaded its presentment, which shared none of that breathless thrill of utter conviction conveyed by The Drama of Civilisation. For there present were the heroic pioneers themselves-Buffalo Bill, his comrade fighters and cowboys, with the strangely immobile Indians, still scarred by their frontier battle wounds, as they performed their prehistoric rites of dance and miming sign-language. There, too, were the idyllic illusion of the primeval forest, with its life of singing birds and stealthy antelopes, emerging at dawn through pristine silences; the mysterious beauty and terror of the prairie fire; the captivating contagion of the old frontier, in its laughter and ballad song, its deviltry and dance, its consummate skill of hand and eye and limb, revealed by those who came fresh from living themselves the epic they enacted.

A CYCLONE IN THE AUTHOR'S SANCTUM; GENERAL CUSTER'S WIDOW AT REHEARSALS

My own memory of that production is vivid. During that autumn and winter, its compelling life wholly filled my imagination, in play with my brothers and schoolmates, of whom I formed an acting troupe and assumed, for the first and only time (at the age of eleven), the rôle of "theatrical manager," directing a highly sensational rival show to Cody's, in our back parlour at Lexington Avenue.

As I write these words, there stands near my chair a tall double screen, still covered with the dark-red and dull-gold of Tiffany wall-paper (relic of the old Lyceum Theatre), battered and torn in spots from its climactic collapse in my back-parlour cyclone of '86, in which my brother Benton was overwhelmed at the age of seven years, while enacting the last human remnant of the demolished frontier town.—It was particularly tolerant of my father to permit this cyclonic climax of my competing home show, as the back parlour, with his private office, beyond rolling doors, with its sanctum of desks and manuscripts, was his special inviolable domain, dedicated to his playwriting and the teaching of his private pupils.—I remember, however, that he occupied a front-row chair, at twenty-five cents admission, and his encores were loudest among the family plaudits, as the double rolling doors—my rival substi-

tute for his Lyceum's "lateral-sliding curtains"—shut off the tempestuous devastation of his sanctum, at the grand finale.

During those months of the Madison Square Garden production, almost all my out-of-school hours were spent there, close at my father's heels. There I watched the gigantic, scenic preparations and the early rehearsals, at which the widow of General Custer herself was present in conference with my father, while he directed the tragic mock-fight with the Indians, in which long-haired "Buck Taylor," as Custer, was the last to fall among the dead.



BUFFALO BILL, CENTAUR: HIS CALM SUPERBITY OF POWER

In my mind's eye, I can see now Buffalo Bill and my father in carnest conversation, walking together across those wide spaces of strewn tan bark—both superb in their bearing; though Buffalo Bill, in his full western regalia of great slouch hat, high boots and shining belt of fire-arms—took on, in my boyish vision, something of that Olympian stature and heroic nobility with which tradition has already clothed him in legend. In sheer fact he had that personal nobility. I think I have never seen another man who walked with such grand and supple power—unconscious and serene. He was born to command. So was my father. Perhaps it was this

common trait in their virile splendour of physique (though my father's was the more graceful and sensitised) which led to this comment in the press of the time:

"In their manly beauty and bearing, the two handsomest men in all America are Buffalo Bill and Steele MacKaye."

Often, while he talked with my father, I have sat on Buffalo Bill's knee, more intent on the marble hardness of his muscles than on his quiet-toned conversation. Once he gave me a great felt hat of his, which I still have. Again he and my father talked of methods in riding, American and English—both being equally scornful of the English "rise in the saddle." Afterward my father, who had been an expert horseman in the Civil War, taught me how to ride.

"Remember this," he said: "In riding, be a horseman, not a man-on-a-horse. Be at one with your mount—not at two's. Let the balls of your feet in the stirrups so press in rhythm to the paces of your horse, that your seat on the saddle remains always easily and equably even with the saddle itself. Never rise and never jolt. Once mounted, become your mount—the single dominating spirit of his four-limbed flesh."

In his comment on the frieze of Phidias * I think he must have recalled his own splendid equestrianism as a "runner-off" of wild horses in war time.

Cody, the great scout, was veritably a Centaur. On horseback he attained his perfection of physical manhood. There he seemed to have been born. Always, even amid the wildest caricoles of his mount, he preserved there a lordly affluence of repose.—In the Yellowstone Park, perhaps for centuries to come, his spirited statue in bronze, by Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, will be speak his rugged memory as a pioneer. Yet its dashing too-staccato verve can never emanate that large serenity of his living repose. No equestrian statue, I think, was ever so superbly "statuesque" as that live rider himself—Buffalo Bill, who seemed ever to ride to the rhythm of a continent, in tempo to the seven-leagued cadences of rolling prairies under serene stars. If ever there were a living symbol of primeval America, it was William F. Cody on horseback.

With Buffalo Bill and my father I used to visit Staten Island, where the Indians of the show had their encampment, removed from

^{*} Quoted on page ii, 61.

the showman atmosphere of Broadway. I remember, later, a great pied delegation of them, in their paint and blankets, all invited guests, huddled in front rows of the Standard Theatre, staring at the French Revolutionary mob in my father's play, *Paul Kauvar*.

MACKAYE, WOLF-TAMER: HIS KEY TO THE ART OF WILD NATURE

My father took me also to the menageries of his friend, Adam Forepaugh, the circus proprietor. There he once tamed a wolf. Passing close to the animal's cage, he felt his hand suddenly gripped by sharp fangs. Instantly he stopped, but, instead of drawing his hand back from the bars, he thrust it quietly a little further into the cage, where the wild beast still held it, eyeing him with savage surprise. This movement of his hand, he told me, he made quite instinctively.

"If I had drawn my hand back," he said, "even for a second, the wolf would have torn it to pieces. Instead, my first reaction was to move it gently toward him, relaxing it in his jaws; then with the other hand I began to stroke his head, and to speak in a quiet, friendly tone. After a moment or two, he relaxed his jaws, releasing my hand.—Then, to Forepaugh's astonishment, I got the keeper to unlock the cage, and went inside to improve on our first acquaintance. 'Br'er Wolf' received me hospitably, and soon the wild fellow was as friendly as any of my pet dogs. No, my son, I wouldn't advise you to try it, unless you should feel the same instinct. I did it, with perfectly good results, simply because unconsciously I have never felt the least fear whatever of any wild thing."

Br'er Wolf probably recognised a "Scotch cousin," his hospitality perhaps being due to old pride of lineage, in sharing the same clan-crest with a "brave-handed" scion of MacAoidh.*—I have personally, however, never tested this special brand of "Scotch."—In reality this lack of fear on my father's part was not merely negative. It implied a positive love and kindred feeling for all wild life and for acts of reckless daring—traits which quickly endeared him to his rugged-lived associates of the "Wild West," and keyed him there to an accomplishment of his artistic task, rarely harmonious with its elemental material.

"DANIEL BOONE AND DELSARTE" CREATE THE FIRST MASQUE OF AMERICAN LIFE

For rarely, if ever before has Daniel Boone thus consorted with "Delsarte" in a common ideal, or a disciple of Phidias pitched camp with Buffalo Bill, to rough-hew a new form of folk-temple for the

^{*} Cf. the clan wolf-legend, on page i, 8 (Prologue).

worship of a new heroic age beyond the Hesperides.—Few or none there were, in 1886, to clarify the larger pioneering significances of The Drama of Civilisation to its show-going public of Broadway. Even to my father it probably appeared as a minor interlude in the structure of his works and days as a dramatist. Yet, in the field of a slowly evolving communal drama, as the very first outstanding and highly successful indoor form of native masque, compounded of large-scale pantomime, mass-grouping and dramatic pageantry, expressing a great national theme, it remains a major landmark. An extensive essay might well be written on its many-sided relations to a native art which, more than two decades later, was to develop heroic proportions in a few noble outdoor experiments, and still looms on the frontier of an unexplored realm of grandeur, in its future growth.

Though the compass of this memoir precludes it here, I hope I may elsewhere deal more comprehensively with the large import of accomplishment and prophecy inherent in this pioneering work of my father; for not merely as his son and biographer, but as a creative worker in the same field, I hold the conviction that his *Drama of Civilisation*, in its aim, technique, and content, was the first significant contribution in our modern world to an evolving communal form in the art of the theatre.

RIENZI: DRAMATISING A "REPUBLICAN" THEME; TRIUMPH AT WASHINGTON

During these years, owing largely to his personal friendship with leading "professionals," Steele MacKaye was informally a kind of consulting expert both in acting and dramaturgy. As a "maître" among French painters was consulted in Paris studios, so in New York his insight and experience were often called in at critical junctures to diagnose, or cure, some faulty piece of interpretation or of playwriting. John McCullough thus sought his aid in enacting Virginius and other rôles. Lawrence Barrett now sought it in the reconstruction of an old play on the "republican" theme of Rienzi, "tribune of the people."

As MacKaye's application to any task was always intense, such reconstructions usually ended in the creation of a practically new play. Such had been the case with his Rose Michel for Palmer, and with his In Spite of All, for Minnie Maddern. Such also was the case with his Rienzi for Lawrence Barrett. The old play, out of which Steele MacKaye thus constructed a new one for Barrett, was a play by the English authoress, Miss Mitford (1787-1855),

whose *Rienzi* was first produced at Drury Lane Theatre, London, Oct. 9, 1828: doubtless the same which was first acted in New York, the following January, by J. W. Wallack, who revived it, in 1857, at Wallack's Museum. The production of my father's new version, which was personally directed by him, was on a grandiose scale, The New York Herald stated (Nov. 25, '86):

"Mr. Bromley is now in this city, making arrangements for Steele MacKaye's production of *Rienzi* for Mr. Lawrence Barrett in Washington, on December 13. The piece will require the services of two hundred auxiliaries. The scenery and costumes are entirely new and very elaborate."

Having auspiciously launched his *Drama of Civilisation* in New York, my father now hastened to conduct the rehearsals of his *Rienzi* at Albaugh's Opera House, Washington, where the opening night was the social and artistic sensation of the season. The Washington National Republican commented:

"PRESIDENT, JUDGES, SENATORS, GENERALS, RISE AND CHEER"

"The audience which assembled last night to witness this most interesting revival could not have been parallelled elsewhere throughout the United States. Judges of the Supreme Court, Generals, Senators and Representatives, with dignitaries of Church, State, and the learned professions, were met together to witness Rienzi.—The President and Mrs. Cleveland occupied the right-hand stage box; in the box above them sat Generals Sherman and Sheridan, with their friends, Mr. Carlisle, Chief Justice Waite and Representative Gibson of Maryland.

. . . After the fourth act, Mr. Barrett gracefully thanked the audience on behalf of the author, Mr. Steele MacKaye, his company and himself. . . . Rienzi must be regarded as a splendid success."

The Washington Post commented: "Steele MacKaye's version is a great improvement on the original. Its reception was extremely enthusiastic throughout. The stage setting was superb and is probably the finest ever attempted in a Washington Theatre."

Of this notable opening night an incident was long afterward recounted by Jerome H. Eddy in the N. Y. Times (Aug. 2, 1914):

"In Washington, D. C., Lawrence Barrett made a memorable revival of Rienzi, rewritten and brought up to date in construction by Steele MacKaye. The opening performance was witnessed by the most notable audience ever gathered in the City of Washington. President and Mrs. Cleveland, Daniel Lamont and Mrs. Lamont, Generals Sherman and Sheridan, and nearly every member of the Cabinet occupied boxes; Senators and Congressmen filled the orchestra seats. . . . In the 'big' scene of the play, the courtiers at a banquet try to assassinate Rienzi.

At their cue, the courtiers jump to their feet, draw their swords, and Rienzi calls for his soldiers.—On this occasion, 125 young men from the government departments were to rush on and surround Rienzi, forming a splendid picture. Then followed the final speech: 'Throw down your swords; meet me in the cathedral and renew again your

allegiance!' Curtain.

"This scene, designed and stage-managed by the author, Steele MacKaye, had been rehearsed by him many times, and Mr. Barrett was anxious to have the final picture perfect. On the opening night, Mr. MacKaye and I stood at the stage first entrance, watching from behind the scenes.—The soldiers came on and formed the splendid picture, but Mr. Barrett, for some reason, failed to speak his final lines, 'Throw down your swords,' etc. Instead, he stood stock still, while the stage manager, knowing his peculiarities, dared not ring the curtain down.—In an instant the entire audience, including the President of the United States and Generals Sherman and Sheridan, rose and cheered tumultuously. There was, of course, a long stage wait, but at last Mr. Barrett gave the signal to lower the curtain. . . . Mr. MacKaye and I immediately hurried onto the stage, where MacKaye excitedly asked Mr. Barrett why on earth he had omitted the final lines. Mr. Barrett replied apologetically:

"'Good God, MacKaye, I entirely forgot 'em! I was watching the

supers form your superb picture."

WHITE HOUSE LUNCHEON: CLEVELAND'S "REPUBLICAN" MANNERS

On this Washington occasion, my father first became acquainted with Grover Cleveland, who invited him to luncheon at the White House, where he made him cordially welcome as "a fellow Buffalonian." Though he had ardently voted against the election of Cleveland, the President's Republican guest was sincerely impressed by the strong intellectual power and direct simplicity of his host; and I recall my father remarking with a smile, of this White House visit, that "President Cleveland's democratic manners had all the genuine dignity of a true Republican."

Two years afterward, President Cleveland was again to honour with his personal interest and official presence a Washington first-night of a play by my father—one which even then he was revising in manuscript, while its theme and title were closely concerned with deep social forces of unrest: forces which later affected the unbalanced mind of an assassin, who caused the death of the President's successor in office.

CHICAGO ANARCHISTS: HOWELLS SUPPORTS MACKAYE'S "MAGNANIMOUS MANHOOD"

On Nov. 26, 1886, the New York Herald had recently reported, in a dispatch from Chicago, under headlines: "Anarchists Thank-

ful; The Chicago Bomb-Throwers granted a Respite for the Present":

"The anarchists were the happiest men in the jail to-day. They had been granted a Supersedeas by Chief Justice Scott of the Supreme Court. Spies and Fieldis thank God."

During the next twelve months, the passions engendered by the alleged crime and the purposes imputed to those "Chicago Anarchists" of the famous "Haymarket Riot," the opinions pro and con, occasioned by their arrest and trial—a cause célèbre which launched the beginning of the so-called "Emma Goldman doctrines," and the confusion of tongues and accusations which later entangled those with the assassination of McKinley—filled thousands of columns in the American press with a ferment of public opinion.—In recollection of that time, and of his own friendly associations with my father, William Dean Howells wrote to me, years after:

"At the house of Judge Pryor, in 1887, several of us came together in sympathy with your father, who was trying—or had vainly tried—to get the U. S. Supreme Court to grant the Chicago Anarchists a new trial. With your father I believed that the men had been convicted on an unjust ruling, and condemned for their opinions, not for a proven crime. I remember your father's wrathful fervour, and the instances he alleged of police brutality. I remember his vivid personality, and the glimpses it gave of a magnanimous manhood."

This "wrathful fervour," of my father, cited by Howells, arose from deep wells of heritage—not of sympathy with those doctrines of anarchy, but with doctrines of liberty, tolerance and free speech—the heritage of American vision, from Roger Williams' to Abraham Lincoln's; and this inhering social sympathy was vitally a growing motive for his constant rewriting of the play that had lived in his mind since his youth—that drama of the French Revolution, which he now named Anarchy.

HIS MOTIVE FOR ANARCHY: "SOMETHING IMPERATIVE TO SAY"

Having rediscovered for himself the pioneer heart of America in the theme and rugged participants of his *Drama of Civilisation*, tokens of his heritage from an era even then vanishing away; and having kindled anew to the old themes of liberty and justice, in reconstructing *Rienzi*, and not having found them outworn even in that stage-tongued tribune of Rome; by these causes his response was the more quickened to issues of a living and imperilled present, to which he believed the theme of his play, nobly presented, might



STEELE MACKAYE



BRONSON HOWARD



WILLIAM GILLETTE



AUGUSTUS THOMAS

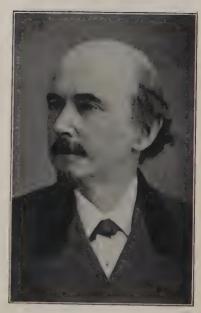
FOUR AMERICAN DRAMATISTS (index)

Of these, MacKaye, Gillette and Thomas were actors and producers of their own plays; MacKaye and Howard were born on Lake Erie in the same year and began their public careers within the same three months (Dec., '70; March, '71).

Plate 70. Chap. XIX.



JAMES A. HERNE Actor-Dramatist.



Dion Boucicault Actor-Dramatist.



"Leading Henry Miller Juvenile" (later, Actor-Manager).



WILLIAM SEYMOUR Actor and Staye-Director (later, Theatre-Historian).

(Index.)

be of real and immediate service. In brief, with passionate earnestness, he believed that he had "something imperative to say" to his time and country, and that he knew how to say it through his art. Early in the new year of '87, this note came to him from Nate Salsbury:

"I am very glad indeed to know that *Rienzi* caught on. But mark me, Steele: *Anarchy* will make you famous and rich—if it's not intrusted to hawk-and-spit managers to butcher."

"Famous and rich" Steele MacKaye certainly could have no objection to being; and certainly to no "hawk-and-spit managers" would he entrust his play, for such "to butcher."—What then? Salsbury himself had made him a munificent offer to produce his play—but not until after a year or more, when Salsbury and Cody should return from introducing the "Wild West" to England. But even at that moment the Anarchists were in jail at Chicago, and American opinion was in turmoil with the whirling hatreds of extremists, whose opposing slogans—"Order!" and "Anarchy!" were centrifugal from the serene temperance of "Republican Law." What then?—Must he himself, at such a time, be silent—pocket his play manuscript for a year or two more?

"When Anarchy was completed," wrote Nym Crinkle,* "Steele MacKaye read it to Nate Salsbury, a clear-headed manager. Salsbury said at once: "That play is a safe investment for a practical man. I will produce it when I return from England, and will guarantee to make you \$500,000 with it in three years." But MacKaye would not wait. He raised \$5,000 and produced it himself at Buffalo."

True; MacKaye would not wait: for what he had to say could not wait.—How he said it as an actor-dramatist, first at his own birthplace, another chapter will record. But first we will turn to an interlude of the years, and glimpse the passage of his life in moods less militant.

^{*} In the N. Y. World, March 4, 1894.

CHAPTER XX

CLUB LIFE AND FRIENDSHIPS

The Lambs, Lotos, Clover, Saturday-Night, Clubs

New York: 1879-1892



"There is no individuality identified with the contemporary stage so strongly buttressed in the affections of his colleagues and the admiration of his friends as Steele MacKaye; and by his friends I mean that large world in a great city that knows the playhouse and the personality of its directing minds."

"Junot," in the New York Star, Jan 1, 1888.



BROADWAY BY GAS-LIGHT: RUNNING A GAUNTLET OF FRIENDS

"WE'RE LATE. TAKE MY HAND, PERCY. STICK CLOSE TO ME. Now, walk fast—and don't speak a word!"

In the dim flare of a street lamp-post, my father turned up the high collar of his great, caped overcoat, pulled down the rim of his dark felt hat over his eyes, bowed his head as against a gale, grasped my boy hand in his giant grip, shoving both our hands into his big coat pocket, and started with me north up Broadway, prowing through the compact crowds like a projected torpedo.—We were then at Broadway and Twelfth Street, half an hour late to a dinner engagement at Thirtieth. That must have been an evening of scant pocket-change, else he would have leapt into his habitual cab and we should have been driven to our destination. Instead he hurried on foot, half concealing his features in the hope of escaping notice and so of averting delay. But his hopes were vain.

"Ah, Steelc, how are you!"—"Halloa, MacKaye, you're the very man we—"—"Bon soir! Pourquoi si vite, mon ami?"—"Just a minute, old boy—where away?"—"Good evening, Sir!"—Half a dozen times in every block he was hailed by such greetings, button-holed by casual acquaintance or exuberant friend, and escaped onward only by a deft and smiling diplomacy of desperation. Around us, as he stopped or moved on, I heard the customary exclamations

and asides of nudging passersby: "Look quick!—There he goes!" "Yes, surely, that's Steele MacKaye," etc.

At the hour of lighted gas-jets, Broadway was then a private boulevard for "the profession," of which the figure of Steele Mac-Kaye was as familiar and vivid a symbol, as the kilted Indian with his hatchet and arrows, betokened the unbiquitous tobacco stores. To-day the President of the United States, or the Prince of Wales, might unofficially pass unrecognised on those same sidewalks; but on Broadway of the Eighteen-Eighties, when New York was still a native locality, not a cosmopolis, no prince in full regalia could have met with more popular deference and democratic goodwill than MacKaye, with his great-coat buttoned to the chin, seeking to elude the friendly battery of his fellow New Yorkers, lay and professional. That evening we were an hour late to our appointment.

"RICH MAN, POOR MAN, BEGGAR MAN, THIEF"; STORIED STATUES
OF NEW YORK

Such popular meetings came to my father unaffectedly from all classes: "rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief."—Actors, clubmen, clergymen, hailed him by name.—Every hackstand "cabbie" knew him, nearly every hotel clerk and bar-tender. In the art leagues he was both lecturer and boon companion. Among the millionaires of the Saturday-Night club he sat between Andrew Carnegie and Austin Corbin, as probably its most impecunious and princely member.

New York razes away old fond associations and records like a ruthless Frankenstein. Almost nothing remains in architecture of clubs, hotels, theatres and homes, where the pulses of its history once beat high with living fellowship. In the parks, however, some statues stand as forlorn derelicts, shorn of their pristine honour and serenity, amid the roaring hurly-burly of forgetful millions.—
For this biographer, nearly every such wistful piece of sculpture holds some quiet memory of Steele MacKaye. In Central Park he himself, in moods of his young manhood pensive and ardent, still stands perpetuated in two statues of bronze, by his friend Quincy Ward—the Seventh Regiment and Shakespeare. In Union Square, where LaFayette on foot salutes the equestrian Washington, I remember standing with my father, who had known well the sculptor of Washington, Henry Kirke Brown, with whom his friend Ward had studied.

"Look, my son," he said, "how graciously these statues have

been placed, in remembrance of history. This French youth, here on his pedestal—see with what Gallic charm the young Marquis returns the serene greeting of the great General."

With that, my father himself assumed the graceful posture of LaFayette, both his arms in the same fluent pose of friendly salute—with an ardour of expressive feeling, which registered for me an instant revelation of history, more deeply spirited than any text-book could ever illustrate.

Again, beside the seated statue of Seward in Madison Square, a few words of his—as he looked at the statue—unfolded some sardonic notes of Civil War meanings, in problems of the patient Lincoln "behind the scenes" of that drama.—And again at 32nd St. and Broadway, leaning against the pedestal of old Horace Greeley (now rummaged aside in a clutter of dirt by the "El" stairway), he eloquently compared the ephemeral sordidness of journalistic politics with the poetic reveries of Shakespeare in his As You Like It, which my father had just taken me to see acted by Ada Rehan, at the invitation of his friend, Augustin Daly.

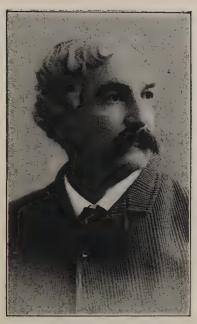
How may I ever convey to this memoir the express and subtle poetry, that illumined his eyes and leapt from his lips—unrecordable! During my own career, scores of his intimates have related to me—with a zest of recollection unabated after many years—the astonishing power and effect of his personality upon their own lives, ambitions and achievements. Here I can only record this fact, and hope that the reader's imagination may help to illumine some data which follow in relation to my father's club-life and friendships, before returning to the chronological sequence of his work.

THE OLD "LAMBS" IN 26TH ST.: "NOCTES AMBROSIANAE"

Founded in 1874 by Henry J. Montague,* the Lambs for fifteen years was the only actors' club in New York City. Its first club-house was at 34 West 26th Street, then the centre of the theatrical district.—From the time of his election to the Club, May 26, 1879, Steele MacKaye, for more than a decade, was one of its most popular leaders, being re-elected to the office of Vice President, or "Boy," more often than any other member.†

[&]quot;During these years," says the Club Book (Annals of the Lambs, 1899), "there were many occasions of historic interest of which, un-

^{*} Cf. page i, 230. † For 1880-'81, the officers of the Club were the following: Shepherd, Lester Wallack; Boy, Steele MacKaye; Recording Secretary, John Drew. 1886-'88, the Sherpherd and Boy were Wallack and MacKaye, Drew being on



Lester Wallack

Actor-Manager; Founder Wallack's

13th and 30th St. Theatres.



Steele Mackaye

Actor-Dramatist-Manayer; Founder
St. James, Madison Square and
Lyceum Theatres.



A. M. PALMER

Manager Union Square Theatre and (later)

Madison Square Theatre.



AUGUSTIN DALY
Dramatist-Manager; Founder Daly's
Fifth Ave. and Daly's Theatres.

Plate 72. Chap. XX.



JAMES O'NEILL (Father of Eugene O'Neill: pp. i, 404-405.)



MAURICE BARRYMORE (Father of John Barrymore: p. ii, 121.)



HENRY E. DIXEY (page ii, 118)



NAT C. GOODWIN (page ii, 231)

FOUR AMERICAN "STARS" (index)

fortunately, the bare records give little hint.-What must have been the genial influence which persuaded the great artists of the world to be the guests of the Lambs? Older members tell of dinners and suppers at which Salvini, Irving, Wilhelmj and Emil Fischer graced the board. A glance at an old menu of one of these occasions gives as guests: Lester Wallack, Henry Irving, General Sherman, General Schofield, Mayor Hewitt, Admiral Gherhardi, Judge Noah Davis, Charles A. Dana, John Gilbert and Steele MacKaye. No pen, however lovingly wielded, could present any adequate picture of these 'Noctes Ambrosiana.'"

On that occasion of the "old menu," Steele MacKaye was not there as guest, but as host * to General William T. Sherman. Seldom indeed was he present at any formal function unless as host, chairman, or guest of honour; for, as the old Scotch proverb says: "Where the MacKay sits, there is the head of the table." And, in accord with that adage, Nym Crinkle wrote: "Steele MacKaye was always at the head of the board."

Of other special menus, among my father's Lambs souvenirs, I find one, signed by his guests, John Gilbert and E. H. Sothern; and another (in gold type) of a banquet tendered by the Club "To Steele MacKaye, May 13, 1887," in honour of his leaving for Buffalo to produce his play, Paul Kauvar, or Anarchy, there. This menu details, with "Squabs aux Cressons," a special "Anarchy Punch." At this banquet he was facetiously toasted as Paul Caviar .- Under caption of "Steele MacKaye as host at the Lambs," the following contemporary report describes a merry gathering of wits:

"There was a charming dinner at the Lambs Club on Friday evening, presided over by the courtly Steele MacKaye. Chauncey M. Depew was there with a fund of new stories. Likewise the only Col. Bob Ingersoll, who shines at a good dinner like an evening star in June.—Among Mr. MacKaye's guests were also the handsome Marquis de Mores, the austere Gen. Roger A. Pryor, John Russell Young, Charles P. Bacon, David G. Yuengling, Jr., Dr. Edward Bradley,

the Council. 1888-'89 the Shepherd was Judge John R. Brady, the Boy, MacKaye; on the Council were E. M. Holland, Otis Skinner, Arthur Wallack. Successors of MacKaye as Boy were Clay M. Greene, Augustus Thomas and DeWolf Hopper. Some other members besides Steele MacKaye, listed later "in memoriam," were: Harry Beckett, John Brougham, Henry C. DeMille, Henry Edwards, William J. Florence, John Gilbert, Charles Harris, John McCullough, John I. Raymond, Edward A. Sothern.

* Concerning this dinner, William Winter wrote, Jan. 8, 1887: "Dear MacKaye, I thank you for your kind invitation to dinner, on Sunday, to meet Gen. Sherman, for whom I entertain the greatest respect and beg to be remembered."

be remembered."

Gen. Horace Porter, Cyrus W. Field, Jr., and Frank W. Sanger. . . . Col. Ingersoll convulsed the table with his descriptions of England as 'a burglar in a white necktie,' and of the astonishment he created in New Mexico when he told them out there that what the country needed was less holy water and more rain."

MACKAYE AND THE WILD BULL OF FONTAINEBLEAU; BOB INGERSOLL VERSUS JEHOVAH

The above "handsome Marquis de Mores" is the resplendent adventurer, whom we have glimpsed before in my father's social entertainings of Buffalo Bill and his "Wild Western" friends of the Dakota Bad Lands, where the Marquis clashed with young Theodore Roosevelt. The Marquis may perhaps have been present at a "big game" banquet, thus recorded in the New York Sun, Feb., 1888:

"At a dinner given by Steele MacKaye to Nate Salsbury the speakers had plenty to say of that great American rifle shot, Buffalo Bill. By midnight nearly everybody present was more or less of a sportsman, and enough game had been killed over again to stock the Washington Market for the holidays. . . . Col. Larry Jerome recalled his own exploit among the wild boars of Virginia. Col. Tom Ochiltree told how he had plugged nineteen peccaries in the eye, from his perch in a Texas Pecan tree. . . . Chairman MacKaye, however, carried off the honors with his story of how he once wore a red shirt into the forest of Fontainebleau, where, suddenly attacked by the famous wild bull of that historic hunting ground, he had shot the infuriated animal between the eyes.—'That identical red shirt,' Mr. MacKaye continued, 'is now worn by one of the anarchs in Paul Kauvar.'"

At Steele MacKaye's hospitable board, such piquante sauce of Munchhausenism was blended with the rugged austerity of General Roger Pryor and the "evening-star-shining" wit of the atheistic Colonel, Robert G. Ingersoll.—Describing how some too-brilliant shafts from the Colonel's wit once shocked the whole board into a ghastly embarrassment by Ingersoll's satiric attack on the "Lord God, Jehovah," Marshall P. Wilder once related, in an article, how MacKaye, as host, rose and restored the outraged guests to a happy rapport by remarking affectionately: "If our good and brilliant friend, Bob Ingersoll, refuses to believe in the Lord of Hosts, at least he cannot prevent the Lord of Hosts—and guests—from believing whole-heartedly in Bob." *

^{*}Apropos of "Ingersoll versus Jehovah" is this hurried note, which my father, dashing into the Hoffman House, one April day in 1890, penned to my mother (then in Washington): "Dear Heart: In rushing about, I have just read Lyman Abbott's article in this month's North American Review, on

OTIS SKINNER: "MISCHIEVOUS STEELE" AS THE LAMBS' "BOY"

"Steele MacKaye, picturesque in bearing, with his hair streaming from under a soft, broad hat, wends his way toward the quiet retreat of the Lambs Club, where the walls tell no tales," wrote a journalist, in 1886.

Behind those walls Otis Skinner in his Footlights and Spotlights has given a glimpse of MacKaye, surrounded by groups of his fellow players, held by the spell of his dreamily persuasive eloquence. And more recently (1926), Mr. Skinner has written:

"Steele MacKaye had the arresting quality that made him always the centre of a group wherever men were, and when he talked he never talked idly. His enthusiasms were great and his vision wide—so wide that often the near-lying obstacles were unseen, until he brought up unexpectedly against them. Not that his was an impractical mind: it was inventive and orderly, but his impatience of the little oppositions that fetter the steps of genius sometimes placed his projects at a disadvantage.—With the temperament of a poet, he found himself laden with the responsibilities of a business man, but whatever task he assumed he made significant and remarkable."

In the rôle of "Boy" at the Lambs, MacKaye retained some of his own boyhood's zest for teasing, as the reference to "Mischievous Steele" suggests in this report * of his acting in his own play, Paul Kauvar:

"It would not surprise the Lambs in his audience if, at any moment, MacKaye should stop in his part and, with his ingratiating smile and mellow voice, call for a speech in the front of the house from some man who could not string three words to save his life, as is the wont of Mischievous Steele when acting as 'Boy' at the Lambs' Club."

TOM EDISON AND THE "MARELESS MOTOR-BUGGY"

This propensity for "mischievous" bantering of his friends is recalled by my brother Arthur in a teasing tilt-at-arms which my father had with his friend Thomas A. Edison, in the office of Mac-Kaye, at 18 West 23rd St., in the winter of '84-'85. At that time Mac-Kaye was building his Lyceum Theatre, and Edison, who was installing for him there the first stage electric light equipment in

^{&#}x27;Some Flaws in Ingersollism'—a most splendid statement concerning the true, as distinguished from sham, Christianity. It makes the heart glow with happiness, so I must send this in desperate haste, to call it to your attention. With ever deepening love for you all.—S. M. Still working hard on play."

*From the N. Y. Telegram, Feb. 25, 1888.

New York, would often drop in to confer with MacKaye on that immediate business, which would usually drift off into an exchange of futuristic schemes not fully ripened till far distant dates. One day, in this manner, their business talk drifted in nubibus above the dust-clouds of Twenty-third Street into a twilit zone of the ether, where they were discussing a peculiar horseless shay, hitched to an electric star blazing with a hundred horsepower.—Then suddenly the transcendental mood of MacKaye, the star-gazing inventor, changed to the earth-earthy mood of MacKaye, the "Mischievous Boy" of the Lambs. The "Boy" himself began to "gambol," and emitted a satiric peal of terrestrial laughter.

"Do you mean to tell me, Tom Edison, that you intend some day to take the old mare out of the buggy shafts, put an electric battery on the driver's seat to whip up the front wheels, and expect that crazy horseless shay to run of itself?"

"Of course I do! That's just the idea—a mareless motor-buggy."

"Why, Thomas, don't you know what would happen to that rig? Dr. Holmes of Boston has diagnosed exactly what happens to old shays on a jag, when they run past the century mark.—Apoplexy, my boy: total eclipse!

"All of a sudden, and nothin' fust— Just like bubbles do when they bust!"

And once more the teasing Lambs' "Boy" gamboled in laughter, while the irate "Thomas" made for the office door in dumbfounded disgust. There he turned and shook a prophetic forefinger at the "Boy":—"Steele, I'm amazed at you. You of all men—to make fun of a practical invention! You, a fellow bursting with imagination—you can't see a sure thing like that? Well, you wait! I'll take you to drive in that mareless motor yet!"

And the future "world wizard" departed, slamming the door. When he was gone, MacKaye rubbed the laughter from his eyes and turned to his son who had been listening. "Arthur," he said, "I haven't the slightest doubt in the world that, one of these days, we shall see waggons moving without horses.—But didn't I get a rise out of Tom!"

My father, however, never lived to see "one of these days," when his old friend Edison hobnobs with Henry Ford in a "mareless motor-buggy." MACKAYE PROPOSES "SOCIETY OF AMERICAN DRAMATISTS." 1888

Augustus Thomas,* his successor as "Boy," has told me of his congenial talks with my father at the Lambs on themes of acting, playwriting and philosophy, and of MacKaye's unfailing interest in young talents just winning their spurs, Mr. Thomas himself being then in his apprenticeship.

"Our American dramatists," wrote Mr. Thomas in 1922,† "increase and multiply. When I first came to New York, who were they? Steele MacKaye and three or four others. Now we have a hundred American dramatists in one organisation."

The organisation here referred to by Mr. Thomas is The Society of American Dramatists and Composers, recently affiliated with the Dramatist's Guild of the Author's League of America, and become "The American Dramatists." The society was founded by Bronson Howard, in December, 1891.—Three years earlier, however, in January, 1888, the potentiality of American dramaturgy had already sufficiently ripened for a proposal of my father, advocating the organisation of our nation's dramatists into a society, to be recorded thus by a New York press correspondent: ‡

"Mr. Steele MacKaye proposed to me, a few days ago, that the time had come for the organisation and founding of a Society of American Dramatists here, somewhat on the plan of the well-known society in Paris. There are more than 40 playwrights, who would he at once available for such an organisation."

AUGUSTUS THOMAS ON "THAT RARE FIGURE-A CAPTAIN"

Augustus Thomas has further described my father and his work, with the knowledge of a fellow club-member and fellow dramatist, in the following statement, written by him, some years ago, for this memoir: §

* "I first saw your father," Mr. Thomas has written me (in 1926) "at the theatre when he came to Saint Louis with a play, but I didn't make his acquaintance then. I think our first meeting was in the Lambs Club in 1889. J. M. Hill and Maurice Barrymore introduced us, and I remember your father listening then to parts of a play of mine. He and I came to be very good friends and were together, two or three times a week, during his troubled production of Money Mad."

† Sept. 23, 1922, in the Literary Digest.

† Sept. 23, 1922, in the Literary Digest.

‡ In the Newark Advertiser (article by its New York correspondent), Jan.
21, 1888.—As early as 1879, a short-lived "Society of Dramatic Authors" had been organised in New York by Julian Magnus and Leonard Grover (the latter being its first President), concerning which MacKaye then conferred with Magnus. Cf. developments of "The American Dramatists," in 1926, on pages ii, 255-257.

§ Written by Augustus Thomas for this memoir, from East Hampton, L. I., July 18, 1911. Also quoted on pages ii, 15 and ii, 454.

"The first impression one received on meeting Steele MacKaye was of the presence of an intelligence. The next was of an unusual energy back of that intelligence. Acquaintance with the man confirmed those impressions.—Steele MacKaye's intelligence and knowledge were aggressive and constructive. If he had not been a dramatist, he would probably have been a soldier, or an architect. His mind was graphic and orderly. He saw things mentally in pictures and diagrams. With him any story dropped readily into form and the form was dramatic. In impromptu address, or response, his argument had shape and was progressive. His first words built constructively to his conclusion. I have heard him in debate when it was evident from his utterances that he saw the entire field of the contest, as a wise general might overlook a battleground in action.

"His faith in himself was contagious. He was persuasive, but with the persuasion of complete belief. That thing he advocated he saw, and where his support was of his own temper, he realised his visions. . . . As a dramatist, he filled a progressive step between the closely articulated machine-like dramaturgy of the school of Scribe and the extreme naturalness of the present-day drama. His plays of Hazel Kirke, Paul Kauvar and Won at Last were the models of their time. . . . He had amazing capacity for work and a quality of inspiring in others enthusiasm for the work in hand. In brief, he was

in his chosen field that rare figure—a captain."

"SALUTATIONS" FROM IRVING; A HAND-BOUT WITH HERRMANN

The Lambs Club "Annals" record also the following dinners, at which MacKaye was presiding toastmaster:

"On November 27, 1887, Sir Henry Irving was tendered a dinner by the Club, 75 persons attending."—"Evening of Jan. 1, 1888, a dinner to Shepherd, Lester Wallack, one of the largest in the 26th Street house."—"Feb. 25, '88, dinner to John Gilbert."—"Another dinner (1890 or '91?), given to Wilson Barrett, will be remembered for the splendid extemporaneous speech of Steele MacKaye." *

The historic dinner at the Lambs to Henry Irving on November 27, '87, cited above, is forecast in these two precursive letters from Irving to my father:

(1)—"Brunswick Hotel, 31 Oct., 1887.

"Dear Steele MacKaye—Greeting! Salutation! Let me right heartily thank you and all our friends for their good fellowship and their kind and flattering courtesy.—It is not in my power, I am sorry to say, to accept the invitation from the Lambs for next Sunday, as I have already accepted an invitation for that evening; but it would be a delight to me to dine on any other Sunday during my stay. The last evening with the Lambs was one of the most delightful that I ever passed.—With every good wish, Sincerely yours, Henry Irving."

^{*} Cf. page ii, 454.

(2)—"Hotel Brunswick, November 6, 1887.

"My dear Steele MacKaye: I am sincerely sorry for the delay in acknowledging the kind proposal of the 'Lambs,' but it has one advantage, for it has given me an opportunity of thanking you for a most cordial letter.—I shall be delighted to meet the Club on Sunday the 27th and I hope that date will be convenient for all. If the gathering can be made quite informal, I shall be glad. A solemn array of Lambs might be alarming, but a little casual gambolling will put me at my ease.—At all events, I am very sensible of the compliment which you and your friends propose to pay me, and I shall look forward to our meeting with more than common pleasure. Bide a wee!—Very sincerely yours, Henry Irving."

Four years later in London, a distinguished interchange of courtesies in the giving of banquets, between Irving as host to MacKaye, and MacKaye as host to Irving, is recorded in Chapter XXVII. Concerning the dinner mentioned in the above letters of Irving, there came this note from the renowned "Magician" of those days:

"Friend MacKaye—Will you kindly reserve me two seats for the dinner to be given in Irving's honour? I would like them next to you, near Irving, if possible. Wire me to let me know if all right. Yours—A. Herrmann."

"Herrmann" was the Houdini of his time; an immensely popular prestidigitator, ventriloquist and "artist of magic," who packed the largest theatres wherever he went. As a boy, I remember him standing at the footlights of the old Star Theatre—tall, thin, black-suited, holding a pack of playing cards in his long deft fingers and scaling them through the air to the dizzy height of the fourth gallery.

Since boyhood, my father himself had been fond of "black magic." He was always very deft at card and hand tricks, and was something of an amateur ventriloquist and hypnotist. In ventriloquism, he would occasionally tease or awe his children, by throwing his voice into mysterious dark corners, from which, on Christmas eves, the deep tones of Santa Claus would thrillingly inquire, to the shivering of small spines:—"Has Percy been a good boy?—Does Benton deserve a full stocking?"

Herrmann and my father were good friends. On one occasion they had a bout to test the strength of their grips. My father had the most powerful hand I have ever known.—Holding a full pack of playing cards in both his hands, Herrmann tore the pack in two halves. Then handing my father another pack, he said: "Can you repeat that?"

"I rather guess so," answered MacKaye. Taking the pack, he also tore it in two halves. Then turning one half lengthwise, with a vise-like wrench he tore that half in two quarters of the original pack.—"Can you repeat that?" he asked.

"I rather guess not," said Herrmann. And he couldn't.

LESTER WALLACK CEREMONIES

For "the evening of Sunday, January first, 1888," Steele Mac-Kaye, as "Boy," issued a formal printed invitation to a Dinner (chronicled in the Club "Annals" as "one of the largest in the 26th Street house") "to be given to our Shepherd, Mr. Lester Wallack, on the anniversary of his birthday, as a tribute of the love and esteem in which he is held by the Flock, and as an acknowledgment of his private and professional worth."—On May twenty-first, of that year, there was tendered to Lester Wallack a benefit, with which these two letters (addressed to my father at the Lambs) are concerned:

(1)—"18 April, 1888.—Dear Mr. MacKaye:

"By Mr. A. M. Palmer's request, I write to ask you if you will kindly consent to play the part of Marcellus in Hamlet on the occasion of the Benefit to be tendered to Mr. Lester Wallack at the Metropolitan Opera House on the 21st May, 1888. Your name will be of value although the part is so trifling.—Mr. Jefferson plays the Gravedigger, Lawrence Barrett, Laertes, Mr. Gilbert, Polonius, Mrs. Bowers, the Queen, Rose Coghlan, the Player Queen, Mme. Modjeska, Ophelia; with Mr. Couldock as the Ghost, Mr. Frank Mayo as the King, and Mr. Booth as Hamlet. . . . The association of names seems very strong, and if a few noble men like yourself give a helping hand, even in small parts, the success of the whole is assured and our dear old manager will receive a substantial benefit financially and artistically. I hope your reply will assent to this daring request.—Yours faithfully, James Schonberg."

(2)—"Dear Mr. MacKaye: The festival performance in honour of Mr. Lester Wallack, in the preparation for which we have been a long time engaged, will be given at the Metropolitan Opera House on the evening of Monday, May 21st, 1888, next.

"We desire to form a committee to aid us in making this occasion worthy not only of Mr. Wallack but of the city in which he has so long and so faithfully laboured. You have been selected as a member of that committee, and we shall be glad to receive your consent to serve. We are—Yours very truly, Augustin Daly. A. M. Palmer."

Lester Wallack was then sixty-eight years old, and was in his last illness. My father was twenty-two years younger. For fifteen

years he and Wallack had been fast friends, as neighbours at Stamford (1875-'79), as fellow Lambs, and as co-workers in the theatre. To join, therefore, in this benefit in any capacity was to him the response of a long and loyal affection.

"Mr. Steele MacKaye," said the N. Y. Herald, "who has been suggested for the part of *Horatio*, spoke very feelingly: "There is nothing in the world I would not do for dear old Lester Wallack,' he said, 'and as for the performance, if I could serve best as a super, I would gladly do it.'" *

SEEKING A NEW LAMBS' "SHEPHERD": PALMER, GILBERT, BRADY

During the next six or eight weeks after the death of Lester Wallack, the office of President, or "Shepherd" of the Lambs was left vacant. By token of two letters which have survived among my father's papers, it is evident that Steele MacKaye was authorised by the Club Council to offer this Presidential office to Manager A. M. Palmer, and then to the distinguished veteran actor, John Gilbert; for on Sept. 14, '88, from the Madison Square Theatre, Palmer wrote to my father:

"Dear MacKaye:-Nothing, in my connection with the stage, has afforded me more gratification than the offer you make me, in behalf of the Council of 'The Lambs,' of the office in our Club so long held by our dear friend and comrade, Lester Wallack-an honour for which I shall never cease to be grateful.—But, on careful consideration, I have concluded that it is not best either for the Club or for myself that I should accept it. My business cares are great and they are Besides these, I have my domestic responsibilities and duties which are, as you know, exacting. . . . At this juncture in its history, our Club should have, at its head, a man who can devote himself to its interests with a singleness of purpose which I feel that I cannot bring to it, and I am sure its affairs would not prosper in my hands to the extent that would alone satisfy me. . . . I thank you most sincerely for the kind, thoughtful, and brotherly manner in which you presented the Council's wishes to me, and shall be placed under renewed obligations, if you will assure them of my earnest wish to do anything in my power now, and in the future, to advance the welfare of the Club they so worthily represent.—Sincerely yours, A. M. Palmer."

Shortly after this declination from Palmer, the famous impersonator of Sir Peter Teazle, L'Abbé Constantin, etc., who had cre-

^{*} Four months later, on Sept. 6th, my father wrote to my mother: "I have just got back from Wallack's funeral—a very crowded and pompous affair. A great crowd went from the church here to the grave at Woodlawn. While there, I paid a visit to our family plot."—Six years later his own burial services took place there, beside the monument of Col. MacKaye, his father.

ated the part of *Prof. Tracy* in my father's *Won at Last* at Wallack's, wrote (then in his last illness) from his summer home at Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass.:

"My dear MacKaye, I esteem the honour that you, and my brother 'Lambs' would confer on me, but the present state of my health, with the advice of my physician, constrains me to decline the flattering proposal you have made me. With sincere thanks for the high compliment my brother Lambs have paid me—though I cannot be their Shepherd, I am still content and proud to be a Lamb.—If I might take the liberty to suggest, I would say that you yourself are the fittest man to fulfil that honourable position. . . And now, my dear MacKaye, in reply to your proposition that I should act in your play,* I can only say, that I have made up my mind that I would not act at all the ensuing season, or in any event but seldom. I regret that it is out of my power to oblige you.—Wishing you the success that your noble play deserves, I am ever your sincere friend—John Gilbert."

GUIDING THE LAMBS THROUGH CRISIS, MACKAYE "FUNDS" THEIR FUTURE PROSPERITY

As to this suggestion of John Gilbert that Steele MacKaye himself was "the fittest man to fulfil the honourable position" of Shepherd, MacKaye was then too harassed by cares and responsibilities, following upon the recent death of his father, to take upon himself any such added responsibility permanently. By the death of Wallack the temporary headship of the Club had fallen upon him as Vice President, and for some strenuous weeks he gladly fulfilled the resulting duties, and continued to conduct the delicate negotiations for a successor to Wallack until he found one in John R. Brady, a distinguished Judge of New York. During those weeks he also guided his club successfully through a crisis of finance and policy, set forth in the following records—the first, in this statement of the World, Oct. 22, '88:

"Some members of the Lambs Club are expressing the desire to admit to Club privileges men who are not of the acting profession but are eligible on other grounds. This desire has been met by heated discussions, the origin of which is familiar to all small clubs, where frequenters of the club cuisine are few in number and economical in habit. . . . In this matter Steele MacKaye is the champion of liberalism, while Sydney Drew favours continued conservatism. There was an election, the other day, and Judge John R. Brady was chosen to take the Club Presidency, left vacant by the death of Lester Wallack."

^{*}This play was Anarchy, and the part offered to John Gilbert by MacKaye was that of the Duc de Beaumont, afterwards first acted in Buffalo by Frederick de Belleville, and in New York by Edwin Varrey.

The financial crisis here referred to was successfully solved by MacKaye, in a proposal which he urged for the creation of lifememberships. This probably saved the permanent life of the Lambs and became an important basis for the Club's growth and prosperity, as is stated in this official record of the Lambs Club "Annals":

"On October 19, 1888, through the instrumentality of Steele Mac-Kaye, Thomas Manning and Thomas B. Clarke, members of the Council, a resolution was adopted creating twenty life-memberships at \$200 each. The funds obtained from these sources of revenue were the beginning of the present prosperity of the Lambs."

"THE MISLAID DRAMA"; DEATH OF JOHN GILBERT; A LETTER
BY "POCKET-POST"

With the new Lambs' Shepherd, Judge Brady, MacKaye was on the friendliest footing, as numerous affectionate notes to him from the Judge attest. Here is one, of "April 19, '90," after having found a lost play which he wanted MacKaye to read:

"My dear MacKaye, That ——!! —— play has been found!!! Awfully sorry to have given you so much trouble. Good subject for a play: The Mislaid Drama. Sigh no more: De boat's ashore!—Thine—Brady."

The office of Shepherd, declined by John Gilbert on account of his health, would—had he accepted it—in any case have been held by him very briefly, for within nine months he died, on June 17, 1889. One June 21st, my father, as chairman of the Lambs' Council, wrote this letter to his widow:

"My dear Mrs. Gilbert: I am requested, by a vote of the Council of this club, to express our profound sympathy with you in the loss you have sustained by the death of your honoured husband, Mr. John Gilbert.—No words known to language can convey to you the regret we feel in losing a member so endeared by the noblest qualities, both as artist and man, to this whole community, and especially to this club, which he had so often favoured by his manly and charming companionship.—Our prayers, dear Madam, are sincere and heartfelt that the comforting presence of the Divine Love may draw near and strengthen you in this hour of affliction.—With deepest respect and sympathy, I remain, dear Madam, Your obedient servant, Steele MacKaye."

Like all successful dramatists, MacKaye was often beset by the requests of aspiring playwrights to read their manuscripts. Often such requests are persistently nonchalant and irritating. A reply to one of that kind is given in the following letter, written by my

father amid strenuous rehearsals for a New York first night. Characteristically the letter, with its rasped and relenting moods, has happened to survive, because after all he posted it, without stamp—in his pocket!

("Dec. 19th, 1887"): "Edward ----, Esq.-Dear Sir:

"I am not aware that I have any obligation to neglect the pressing business of my life to meet the convenience of yours.—I am in the habit, like other sane men, of attending first upon those who have some apparent right to claim my time. I have not sought your advances, and if you have not sense enough to wait until the demands upon my life give me opportunity to justly consider your uncalled-for intrusion upon my good nature, I do not see that you are entitled to an interview.—If I gave all the time inconsiderate egotism demanded of me, I would not have life enough left to earn bread for my little ones.— Give them a chance, and oblige

Yours Resptly-Steele MacKaye.

"P. S.—Having replied to your impatience—which, to judge from your letter, you ought to have wit enough to understand, I will add that I consider it a luxury to lend a helping word—or hand—to a good man, if I can, and therefore will gladly meet you, after I have been safely delivered from the labour pains attending the birth of my new babe—Anarchy. . . . I have read the dramatis personæ of your furious tragedy, and it suggests the possibility that you have brains enough to distinguish between my resentment at your assumed right to command my pen, or time, at will—and my own possible willingness to gladly give you such moments, and attention, as the exigencies of my life permit."

BEATING "BOUCY": NAT GOODWIN'S "CUSS"-FIRE

Apropos of plays and manuscript-readings by my father at the Lambs, this little squib from The Washington Post (April 27, '90) is here pertinent:

"Scene: The Lambs Club. German Porter opens door to importunate Visitor:

"Visitor (breathlessly): Is Steele MacKaye in?

"Porter: Yaw, sir. He vas upstairs writing one play. He vil take one hour to be done.

"Visitor (more breathlessly): He will, eh? Then he beats Boucy.—Boucicault takes an hour and a quarter, writing his.

"Voice of MacKaye (from head of stairs): He means reading a play, old man. Come up!"

Perhaps "Visitor," when he "came up" may have discovered the popular star, Nat Goodwin, in spellbound throes of accepting

Col. Tom—a play of my father's, which was short-lived in Goodwin's production of it.

One day, at the Lambs Club, Goodwin was heard exploding a rocket of stored "cuss"-fire.

"Why did you accept that play, Nat?" a fellow-Lamb asked him. "Why?—Why??—Because that God-infernal MacKaye is such a hell-damn angel of a heavenly reader!"

J. JEFFERSON AND MACKAYE; MACDONOUGH AND A MIDNIGHT MASTERPIECE

As the well-nigh perennial "Boy" of the Lambs, MacKaye's official relations with other leading professionals were those of friendly intimacy. In response to a Lambs invitation came this note from the inimitable "Dr. Oldspeed" in 1882 (Nov. 29th—from "152 West 57th St."):

"My dear MacKaye—I owe you an apology for delaying my reply to your letter. I received it at the theatre during the performance and mislaid it in the dressing-room.—I knew something was hanging over my head that should have been attended to, but with the every-day rehearsals of The Poor Gentleman (which we produce next Tuesday in Phila.) and Dr. Oldspeed on the brain, the affair slipped my mind. . . . It is now too late to accept the honour the Club have so kindly tendered me. Will you please express my regrets and apologies, and oblige, Faithfully yours—J. Jefferson."

Six years later, the writer and recipient of this note joined in publicly protesting against a pending law, which they believed to be harmful to the art of their profession—as is suggested by this comment of the Boston Transcript (Dec. 31, '88), in which the "poetic frenzy" assigned to MacKaye was evidently phrased by his "fervid" interviewer:

"Steele MacKaye joins Joseph Jefferson in a fervid protest against the proposed amendment to the contract labour law for the protection of American actors.—'To claim protection for the American actor,' cries MacKaye, with a fine poetic frenzy, 'is to drag him out of the infinite spaces of intellectual liberty down to the sodden earth, where slavery to the fatal fetters of material existence is the price that must he paid for mere monetary success.' . . . But there is sound thought underlying this outburst, namely, that the principle of protection, however justifiably applied to trade, has no place 'in the realm of art.'"

Numberless anecdotes of my father at the Lambs have passed with the passing of old Club members. Some are still handed on in tradition. One of these narrates how J. B. MacDonough (the father of Glen MacDonough) was held enthralled one midnight by

the plot of a play, which Steele MacKaye improvised on the instant and eloquently embellished by unfolding its full structure of acts and scenes, its interweaving of motives, its powerful curtain climaxes and interplay of characters, with flights of their dialogue, which MacKaye himself variously interpreted with striking impersonations, until the astounded MacDonough cried out: "Stop there, Steele! I'll buy your play on the spot. Here's ink and paper. I'll sketch our contract now. To-morrow afternoon, meet me here with your written scenario, and I'll hand you my cheque for \$1000, advance royalties."

So said, so done. MacDonough wrote out the agreement. He and MacKaye signed it; and the jubilant purchaser went home, in the small hours, to dreams of enormous profits from the incomparable play he had already half seen acted in the sanctum of the Lambs. The next afternoon, by appointment, he met the eloquent author on the very spot where he had created his midnight master-piece.—"Here's my cheque for the thousand, Steele. That play is a million-winner—a bonanza for us both, my boy! Where's your scenario?"

MacKaye gazed at the cheque handed to him. His pockets were as empty of pence as his mind was filled with images of the ubiquitous duns that haunted him, by day and night. But he handed the cheque back, with a rueful smile and a gaze fixed far off.—"My scenario? Yonder—in limbo! Take back your thousand, old man. It's no use. You must have imagined that play, for I can't recall a line, a scene or a character. My mind is as innocent of it as the babe unborn!"

MacDonough gasped in chagrin; inexorably the cheque and contract were torn up; and so nothing survived of that unique midnight production—except an anecdote.

JOHN MCCULLOUGH; "NYM CRINKLE"; WM. CRARY BROWNELL

To John McCullough and his friendship for my father frequent reference has already been made in these pages. Devotedly attached as a pupil and a fellow actor, the famous tragedian was outspoken, by word of mouth and in print, concerning his artistic indebtedness to MacKaye, at whose home he was often a warmly welcomed visitor. On a road tour—from "Memphis, Tenn., March 15, 1878"—he wrote to my father:

"My dear friend-I met a lady in Boston, during my recent engagement there, a Miss Emelie A. Gavin. She read to me, and I think

she has great dramatic inspiration. She asked me who was the most competent person to instruct her for the stage. Of course, you know what reply I would make. . . . Will you, my dear friend, give her a hearing, and tell her frankly what you think her chances would be? I informed her you were a very expensive luxury, but she won't mind that. I have told her she would have an opportunity of playing Lady Macbeth with me, during my coming engagement in New York. She is exceedingly tall, and at first sight may seem ungainly, but as she recites she is quite graceful and her action appropriate.—However, you must be a better judge of that than I can be. Will you drop me a line to Detroit? . . . How, are you, old fellow? I hope to see you in about four weeks. My engagement in Boston was a stunner, and even in this God-forsaken country I am blessed with almost the same luck. Your friend always—John McCullough."

Another friend of many years, often mentioned in this memoir, was A. C. Wheeler, dramatic critic, a glimpse of whom and another writer in conversation with my father is given in this recollection, written to me recently by the distinguished essayist, William Crary Brownell:

"I remember your father so well—such a striking personality, of an opulence quite regal! I was on the World, with A. C. Wheeler, 'Nym Crinkle,' when your father was helping him out with their play, Twins, at Wallack's. . . . I recall a long evening with both of them, following a dinner together at the old Union Square Hotel, and extending into the 'small hours'—filled with psychology, philosophy, abstract and applied, quite wonderfully poured out from your father's apparently inexhaustible store, all thoroughly alembicated by him in the process. I recall, for instance, his definition of a principle's difference from a fact—'A principle is a universal fact'—as an improvement on the text-book distinction between law and phenomena. . . . The rest is a vivid impressionist picture, though of a reality particularly definite and clear-cut."

A lifelong friend of my father, since their boyhood—when both were "foster mothered" by the Aunt Lucy Faxon already herein described—was Colonel Henry Watterson, of Louisville, Kentucky.—The accidents of surviving record are unpredictable.—Vividly I remember the upleaping fountains of many-prismed eloquence which used to burst from tumultuous encounters between these affectionate adversaries of South and North—deep-resounding encounters, wherein the invincible St. Jefferson of Dixie Democracy flicked his wild fore-lock and flashed the rapier of his one eye, in duel with the indomitable St. Lloyd of Garrisonian Republicanism, while the claret bottles bounced to their thunderbolts. Yet in symbol of such storm-swept communion of spirits, there flow from old files

only such little rillets as this, from an inkbottle of the "Union Club, New York":

"It will give me very great pleasure, my dear Steele, to dine with you, Wednesday. Your friend, Henry Watterson." *

FINALE OF "ROBSON AND CRANE": WRITING A COMEDIAN'S SPEECH

In the spring of 1889, Stuart Robson, the noted comedian, was about to wind up a dozen years of partnership with William H. Crane, in their highly successful acting-combination of "Robson and Crane." Feeling that the occasion warranted it, he had asked his friend, MacKaye, to come to his rescue by penning for him a "letter" to the press, and now besought him for a similar expression of his own (Robson's) sentiments, in the form of a "speech," to be spoken by Robson at the last curtain-fall of "Robson and Crane." His "memoranda" for this are included in this letter, written from "the Tremont House, Chicago, March 22, '89":

"My dear MacKaye—I cannot sufficiently thank you for the 'letter.' It will answer my purpose admirably. Now if you can let me have the

'speech' by April 1st, I will be doubly indebted.

"Mem.-Start off with 'my friends may not be aware that they are being addressed by the greatest actor-orator of the century. Every note of my voice † adapted to the requirements of oratory—the delicate finish of my artistic work—the great service I have been to Crane in this respect, which has resulted in placing that great actor at the very head of all comic actors.' . . . Give 'em a line about the dignity of true comedy. The pain of a separation (experienced by both), after a partnership which has lasted for twelve years, without an ugly word from the lips of either. Then let me predict for Crane a career of a single star, which will bring him increased honours and profit, and wind up by congratulating the audience on having heard a speech which posterity will regard as an effort worthy to rank with the matchless efforts of a Demosthenes. . . . In writing speech, bear in mind I don't want to bind you to these suggestions-very stupid, I know-and given as a starter. Anything you write will be admirable. A funny line. Serious line. A mingling of both. . . . Lou James read your play t vesterday, and was delighted with it.-May the sun shine on you, and brighten the rest of your days, as you deserve! Your friend-Stuart Robson."

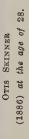
^{*} An affectionate letter from Watterson just before my father's death is quoted on page ii, 456, and other references throughout this memoir are given in the Index.

[†] A peculiar squeak in his voice was a lifelong asset of Robson's comedy appeal.

[‡] Le., MacKaye's An Arrant Knave, in manuscript.—"Lou" James refers to the celebrated comedian, Lewis James, long associated with Augustin Daly.



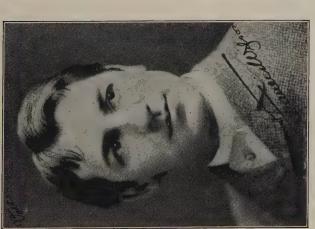
(1886) at the age of 28. OTIS SKINNER





(1875) at the age of 22. JOHN DREW

THREE RISING STARS OF AMERICAN COMEDY (index)



(1885) at the age of 31. FRANCIS WILSON

Plate 74. Chap. XX.



ROBERT G. INGERSOLL Orator.



GEN. HORACE PORTER
U. S. Ambassador to France.



HENRY A. GILDERSLEEVE Justice of Supreme Court of New York.



COL. HENRY WATTERSON Editor of "Courier-Journal".

A GROUP OF EMINENT TOAST-MASTERS

Steele MacKaye was noted as a brilliant conversationalist and after-dinner speaker (page i, 443). These close mutual friends of his were often his guests, or hosts, on gala occasions (index)

A CONNECTICUT OBERON: P. T. BARNUM AND "PUNGENT MYSTERIES"

Among my father's friends and acquaintances of the circus world, I have already referred in these pages to that imperishable Yankee of the twilight zone of veracity—Phineas T. Barnum. Now become the immortal Oberon of a saw-dust Fairyland, panoplied on his Jumbo of Dreams, encirqued by a herd of snow-white elephants and choired by lyric processionals of Jenny Linds, he then still walked in mortality, clad in a Connecticut waistcoat, wherein I recall (from my childhood) his portly middle expanded in a public oration and double-creased in a bow—from the soapbox centre of a circus ring—to a circumference of roaring plaudits. On that occasion, my father led me afterward by the hand into the pungent mysteries of "behind the scenes," there to meet the redoubtable Phineas himself, in his managerial sanctum of menageries. Among my father's papers I have still a dateless note to him from "P. T. B." appointing an hour of personal conference in Brooklyn.

LOTOS, CLOVER, SATURDAY NIGHT, NINETEENTH CENTURY CLUBS;
MARK TWAIN, DIXEY DININGS

Besides being a member of the Lambs, Steele MacKaye was a member of two other New York clubs *—the Saturday Night Club (from 1880 to 1894), whose membership in 1890 was limited to thirty-five; and the Lotos Club (Nov. 15, '87-Sept. 20, '90), of which Whitelaw Reid was then President. MacKaye was also a non-resident member of the Clover Club of Philadelphia (Moses P. Handy, President), whose membership, in 1889, was limited to thirty residents and fifteen non-residents.

"Some idea of the Clover Club," wrote the New York World, "may be gathered from a statement by Mark Twain concerning it. It was at the dinner (held in the Hotel Bellevue) immediately following General Grant's death. Edwin Booth came into the dining room very late, after acting at the theatre. He sat down beside the humourist, who had been at the board all the evening. . . 'Booth,' said Twain quietly, 'this is the most surprising set of fellows. After talking of Grant with grave eloquence, they turn suddenly to gay banter, in a repartee worthy the most noted of wits.—They've kept it up now for five hours, yet evidently I'm the only fellow here who feels his liquor!'"

In a notable dinner of the Clover Club, Nov. 17, '87, MacKaye participated with Gen. Horace Porter. On Jan. 18, '88, a great

^{*}The noted comedian, Mr. James T. Powers, has told me (in 1927) about a meeting of the Five A's Club ("American Actors' Amateur Athletic Assn."), at which Steele MacKaye presided; also of merry gatherings at Brown's Chop House, where Powers himself, Steele MacKaye, Maurice Barrymore, Richard Mansfield and others met in the 'Eighties.

banquet, organised two months in advance, was given in honour of MacKaye by the Nineteenth Century Club (Courtlandt Palmer, Secretary). At Delmonico's, on May 11, '86, at the "Farewell Banquet to Henry E. Dixey," on his departure for Europe, MacKaye was among the chief speakers. Of another smaller occasion—a midnight supper at which Steele MacKaye was host—Henry Dixey himself (1925) has related the following:

"Steele gave the party. There were short and brilliant speeches. Edison sat on Steele's left, I (Dixey) on his right. Steele insisted every man should speak five minutes on something in his own professon. Edison talked of his boyhood days, his beginnings and inventions; Frank Mayo and Frank Sanger about the stage; Dr. Edward Bradley talked on medicine; Alger about Edwin Forrest, of whom—in the rôle of Virginius—one of the actors present gave a sonorous imitation that woke up the neighbourhood for miles around, till they hurled bootjacks from the back windows. I spoke last, about a dream of mine. . . . I said I dreamt I had wandered into an enormous theatre upsidedown, where the actors were playing Hamlet, inversely as it ought to be played. Then I gave an imitation of just how those dream-actors played it, giving an angular travesty of Hamlet's speech to the Players. That ended the evening with a knock-down."

"A TIFF OF TEMPERAMENTS"; "ONE OF THE GENTLEST GIANTS"

A postscript to this anecdote of Henry Dixey is this note ("Nov. 21, '89") from my father to "Harry" himself, written (so Dixey has told me) after an "affectionate tiff of temperaments," which once befell them as friends:

"My dear boy: I have never for a moment doubted the depth, or sincerity, of your affection. I confess I was hurt—and felt that further discussion was worse than useless—but I had not walked a block, before I realised that I had given more intention to your words than your own heart dreamed of. I knew you would be sorry, and your welcome note confirms my estimate of the personal quality which binds so many to you.—With heartiest good will, I remain as always, Your sincere friend, Steele MacKaye."

Years later, from "The Players, Oct. 21, 1915," Henry Dixey wrote to me:

"Dear Percy MacKaye: Your father to me was a god. In every department of the theatre he was a genius. No one has taken his place. I doubt his like will ever appear again. He was far beyond his time and knew all the nine Muses of the playhouse. . . . I can see him now, showing his wonderful model of Columbus: his dear face lit

up, his great manly frame one moment tense like a gladiator, the next as flexible as a girl of eighteen, radiant with his rare intensity. . . . The monuments he built have been pulled down, nothing left on their sites to tell of his achievements. But some of us boys who knew and loved him have each a tablet in our hearts for one of the gentlest giants that ever lived."

"COURAGE AND GOOD LUCK!" TO A FELLOW DRAMATIST

My father's relations with his fellow professionals were nearly always of the friendliest kind; and it is pleasant to record the following instance of his quick responsiveness to a fellow dramatist, at a time when he himself was in very dire straits of circumstance.*

—Mr. Sydney Rosenfeld (author of numerous plays and of several earnest efforts for organisation on behalf of better American drama), who once produced (1876) a skit of his on my father's play, Rose Michel, has written to me (1925):

"My personal acquaintance with your illustrious father began at the Lambs Club, and he gave me evidence, in the year 1890, of great personal goodwill.—It was at the time I produced, as my own venture, my play called Stepping Stones, which was not a financial success, but contained what I considered in certain respects some of my best writing. Your father undertook, as a proof of his appreciation of this work, not only to assemble through his personal influence some of the most prominent members of the profession at a matinée I gave, but wrote me the following charming letter, which I have always retained:

"'The Lambs Club, Feb. 27th, 1890.

"'My dear Sydney Rosenfeld—I send you a number of letters I have written. If you approve of them, you can mail them.—I have seen the Madison Square people personally. I have also distributed a dozen copies of the letter to you among professionals, who have promised to secure names. I hope you will hear from them all to some purpose. I enclose half a dozen copies for your own use, and shall leave nothing undone in my power to secure for you that artistic compensation which I know you, like all genuine artists, hold most dear.—Courage and good luck to you! Yours heartily—Steele MacKaye."

"CHARLIE" WARREN STODDARD, WORLD BOHEMIAN; REG. BIRCH

The relations of the Lambs Club with the Bohemian Club of San Francisco have long involved the mutual interchange of guests among their membership. Among the most distinguished of such literary "Bohemians" was Charles Warren Stoddard (1843-1909), author of South Sea Idylls, 1873 (with a later-edition Introduction by Howells), a volume unique in distinctive charm of style, which

^{*} Cf. page ii, 235.

brought him the comradely friendship of Robert Louis Stevenson, who once wrote for him this gay quip in his "ain braidest Scotch":

"Far had I rode and muckle seen,
And witnessed many a ferlie,
Afore that I had clappit een
Upo' my billy, Charlie.

"Far had I rode and muckle seen In lands accountit foreign, And had foregathirit with a wheen Ere I fell in wi' Warren.

"Far had I rode and muckle seen,
But ne'er was fairly doddered
Till I was tristit as a fren'
Wi' Charlie Warren Stoddard."

"Charlie," as all his intimates, old and young, called him, was a genius in friendship: poet friend of poets, artist interpreter of artists: a captivating, droll, languid, humorous, drawling world-wanderer; a catholic pagan and dreamer of Parnassus, whose poetic artistry in prose ranks him permanently among the very foremost of our native writers. His style is steeped in old California, his birthplace.

A friend of Bret Harte, he excelled Harte in poetic sensitiveness and large human sympathy. Though his works, Mashallah, The Lepers of Molukai; Exits and Entrances, South Sea Idylls, The Island of Tranquil Delights—with others partly destroyed, during publication, by the San Francisco earthquake—are now out of print, they should be collected to the honour of American letters and to the delight of world readers. On the Nile, he had been moonlight-marooned with an Egyptian princess; by the Avon, he had beguiled the spinster of Anne Hathaway's Cottage to tuck him up in Shakespeare's "second-best" bedstead.—One of the last times I saw "Charlie" Stoddard, he was sitting wrapt in a dressing gown, in an old book-filled room, at Cambridge, recovering from a severe illness.

"Come in, Perrc-y," he drawled out, waving to a big pile of news-paper clippings beside him. "Behold the resurrection and the life! See here what has fallen to feed me in the wilderness. I'm living on manna. I'm devouring my own—obituaries!"

Very ill, he had been reported dead, and he was now reading his death notices with huge gusto.—These glimpses of him I record here

because he was not only a devoted friend of my father, but remains in memory characteristicly a symbol of my father's boon companionships with men—artists, bohemians, thinkers, mystics and agnostics, Olympian misfits of a routineer world, searchers in dross for pure beauty, with whom his own temperament was affectionately kindred.—Out on the far sand dunes of Monterey, where he died soon after, "Charlie" Stoddard once said to me of my father:

"The heart of your dad was an improved philosopher's stone. With it he reversed the covetous aim of the alchemists; for with it he would turn sordid gold into pure *Steele*, to slay the old Dragon of Unkindliness."

Another gracious "Bohemian" of California, now a fellow "Player" of New York, a mutual friend of Stoddard and my father,
—Reginald Birch, the artist, said to me, concerning this memoir:

"Be sure, my boy, that your story reaches the height of its theme; for Steele MacKaye is a very immortal person of the American theatre."

MACKAYE AND MAURICE BARRYMORE—"TWINS OF THE LAMBS' FOLD": TWO TALES

Of all the boon companionships in my father's club life, his friendship with Maurice Barrymore was probably the most spirited, and congenial. During a comradely intimacy of many years, their mutual traits of eloquence and effervescing imagination exulted in continual jousts of playful badinage and of earnest philosophisings. That Barrymore fire burns on in a new generation.

"I am pleased," his son John Barrymore has written me (1926), "to know that you are writing the life of your father. Remembering the delightful way in which my father spoke of him, the memoir of Steele MacKaye will surely be welcomed by every one interested in the constructive life of the theatre."

So, during my own boyhood, I have heard the name of Maurice Barrymore countless times on my father's lips, and always with zest and fondness.—I remember being taken by my father to the theatre to see Barrymore act with Lillie Langtry in Lady Clancarty (my father's collaboration with Tom Taylor) and in Camille.—In the latter I recall chiefly the virile charm which Barrymore's tall, graceful figure lent to the "perfect pattern" of a society man in immaculate dress clothes, rendering black broadcloth and white shirt-bosom romantic for the only time in my memory. In his Recollections of

a Player, James H. Stoddart (who acted Pierre Michel in my father's Rose Michel) has written:

"Barrymore was one of the most entertaining of men—a bohemian in many respects, but generous to a fault. His performance of Captain Swift, in Boucicault's play, was masterly. He was a most amusing companion, inexhaustible with anecdotes. Often on the road, the company (after the evening's performance) would sit up till break of day, held spellbound by his brilliant talk and happy wit."

Such spellbinding power was a trait common to both Barrymore and MacKaye, who were familiarly dubbed at the Lambs "the twins of the fold." It is a pity that, among the keepers of that spirited flock, there was no official "Boswell," appointed to tally the scores of their double wit, or to fence (in Henry Irving's phrase) the "casual gambollings" of their fleet fancy in permanent archives of Club "Annals."—There were, to be sure, frequent allusions in contemporary press-comments, like the following (in 1889):

"Such brilliant players as Frank Mayo, Maurice Barrymore and Steele MacKaye draw men of the same stamp around them. It is no surprising thing, therefore, to find in their dressing-rooms the leading wits, poets, playwrights, and players of the land, and to hear conversations which, however interrupted by their continuous disappearances, are always a treat to the lovers of intellectuality." . . . "After some first night of interest, you may often see Steele MacKaye and Maurice Barrymore, with other choice spirits, in some well-known café, discussing drama and more soothing refreshments with keen acumen."

Since, at times, the pith of biography is found in a spoken anecdote, perhaps I cannot better suggest some moods of my father's fellowship with Barrymore and with other club friends, than by recording a couple of incidents, which have taken on with time the atmosphere of legendary tales. The first, recounted to me by my brother Arthur, who was witness to its idiosyncrasies, is here retold by me in "scenario" form.

THE DEFENDED ALTAR, OR THE MAD UN-TEA PARTY

The "Scene" is the café of the Union Square Hotel, in the Mid-Eighteen-Eighties. Seated at a great Round Table, hostelried with tall glasses, vari-hued bottles and Havana cigars, "discovered"—Steele MacKaye, one of seven "Personæ," his guests, circled in the following sequence, commencing on his right:

Maurice Barrymore, "leading man" of "Society Drama"; Geof-

frey Hawley, "a brilliant young actor, who drank himself to death soon afterward"; Lester Wallack, "Shepherd of Lambs" and dean of actor-managers; Sheridan Shook, manager of the Union Square Theatre; Cazauran, playwright; Arthur L. MacKaye, formerly "make-up man" at the Madison Square, now secretary to his father, Steele MacKaye, the dramatist-host of this circle.

First speaker, "at rise of curtain"—Barrymore: In jocund-satiric mood, Apollonian, he showers a bright volley of "Society Drama" shafts at the altar of "Delsarte," enwreathed by blue Havana incense, rising from the Delphic lips of oracular MacKaye.—Far laughter of the gods, echoed faintly by the charmed Circle.

Enlargement of the Steele-bright orbs of the Oracle; flashes of pent lightnings; now the rattling shafts are reversed, penetrating the shirt-bosom armour of "Society Drama."

Murmurs of the Circle; glad peals and fresh volleys from the Barrymorean quiver; low thunder and thick clouds of incense from the defended "Altar." . . . Then "stage business":

"Manu forti," with the clenched male grip of MacAoidh, his Highland ancestor, the fist of MacKaye hammers his own knee, an anvil of welding argument, blasting the falling shafts with refutation.—Again the clenched hand is raised: Barrymore recoils, but too late: the "fistic" hammer descends, pounding Barrymore's knee till the pan rings. . . . Then progressive "business"—and what Lewis Carroll might have called a Mad Un-Tea Party begins:

Barrymore winces back, hitching toward Hawley. Resultantly—Hawley hitches toward Wallack; Wallack toward Shook; Shook toward Cazauran; Cazauran toward Arthur; Arthur toward Steele MacKaye, who—reaching to span the gap of the argument—himself hitches toward Barrymore, and renews the knee-pounding evidence. . . . Whereupon, secundo—

Barrymore hitches toward Hawley; Hawley toward Wallack; Wallack toward Shook; Shook toward Cazauran; Cazauran toward Arthur; Arthur toward Steele MacKaye, till— Tertio, quarto, quinto—like the nursery round, wherein "Cat begins to kill rat, rat begins to gnaw rope, rope to hang butcher . . . and dog to bite pig, till pig begins to go—"

Finale: Barrymore rises, in a roaring circumference of laughter, and calls aloud—like the death-cry of Clytemnestra—"Goal! Goal!—I touch wood! You win, Steele! The altar of Delsarte is impregnably pure and white; and the thigh of my leg is incurably

black and blue; and the drinks are on me; and what are you guzzling sons of laughter-hags going to have?"

In the burst of cheers and drinks that drowned this swan-cry of Barrymore, my brother Arthur relates that my father—then first realising himself as the cause—laughed louder than all.

TWO PHILOSOPHERS IN A "FAERY-RING"

The old member of the Lambs, who told me the following anecdote, smiled in quiet reminiscence as he leaned against the bar of the Players, in the deserted pool-room, one early after-midnight morning, some years ago. (I retell it—as needs I must, with these legendary tales—in images that rise from the mists of receding memory.)

"I was alone," he said, "at just such a four-in-the-morning hour at the Lambs, in the deserted clubhouse,—alone, that is, with two others, who had been sitting at a small table, talking like mad since midnight. Not loud, you understand; not arguing; but flailing all the universe with their tongues in a rhythmic-beating tempest of quiet intensity: Philosophy—God, Man and the Devil, Socrates, Swedenborg, Christ, art and atheism,—Why? and Whither?—Now and Nevermore:—moods and queries and themes like those kept flaring and lulling and leaping, like flames on a windy campfire, from face to face, close together, as they talked and talked, while I listened from a corner near them.

"At last the clock rang out 'four,' and the club watchman came in, 'hemmed' his throat, stood round a bit and then coughed out, 'Excuse me, Mr. Barrymore.—Ahem!'

"But the steady storm of speech rolled on-oblivious.

"'Beg pardon, sir, Mr. MacKaye, but it's after four, and orders is to close down. Here's your hats and coats, gentlemen. And I fetched along an umbrella. Sorry there's only one in the rack, sir. It's startin' to snow outdoors. No wind, sir, so I guess this will give cover for two, till you find a cab.'

"Hats and coats were on, before the two talkers were aware of their interrupter, who held open the outer door, raising the umbrella. In the night outside, a light snow was falling. . . . Barrymore and MacKaye glanced, for an instant, absently at the doorman. Then, still ardently talking, both grabbed the raised umbrella, and went out together.—Locking the door behind them, the watchman shuffled off and came back with my room key.

"I was lodging in the club that night, but not feeling sleepy yet,

I took up a magazine and settled myself in an armchair to read. I must have hit upon some rather absorbing story, for the next stroke of the clock I heard was 'six.' Then I rose, stretched, and started for bed. First, though, I thought I'd take a snuff of air to turn in on; so I went to the front door, unlocked it and stepped out on the sidewalk.

"The snow now was falling thick and quiet, and a pale dawn was commencing. Through the swarming flakes, the light from a corner lamp-post burned cloudily, and lit the dim-white cover of snow on the sidewalk—all except one round, dark spot whence a low stream of sound was rising in a steady rhythm.

"Over that dark, round spot, motionless, hung a raised umbrella; and under that umbrella stood Barrymore and MacKaye—still talking, madly. . . . Around them, the fires of philosophy and friendship had thawed a 'faery-ring' in the dawn-bright snow."



CHAPTER XXI

HIGH TIDE

"Anarchy" and "Paul Kawvar"

Buffalo and New York

1887-

A CORRIDOR OF SUCCESSES AND A NEW THRESHOLD

In the career of steele mackaye, the year 1887 was marked with a luminous Red Letter—the Halcyon initial of Health and Hope. He was then in the heyday of his ripening powers, on the high tide of accumulated fame. The past was a bulwark of good works that stood ranged about him in present acknowledgments, and the future beckoned with glad assurance of larger achievements.

In New York—his Drama of Civilisation a fresh and jubilant success; from Washington—his Rienzi, a recent triumph, moving with Lawrence Barrett through other cities to an auspicious New York opening, at Niblo's, in May: in New York and throughout the country—revivals, stock productions, road-tours of four among his earlier plays (Rose Michel, Won at Last, In Spite of All, Hazel Kirke); from many parts of the Union—young men and women of talent seeking him as a teacher at his home in New York, near which the two theatres of his founding were flourishing centres of "new School" productions and experiments, projected largely by his original initiative: Of these significant achievements—some then begrudged, but all proved—he himself was almost oblivious, his eager interests held in spell of the next creative experiment for his adventurous mind to solve.

Had he been as keen business man, to keep and develop his successes, as he was gifted artist to create them, he would already have been the wealthiest theatre-magnate of the metropolis. As it was, he had taken no precautions whatever in such thrift, so that all his continuing successes brought him personally no accruing wealth, while accumulating debt was ever continuing, in a vicious circle, to undermine his future successes, by obliging him to make further sacrificing contracts to obtain momentary relief. In the spring of '87, having passed through a corridor of successes, he stood on the threshold of another—the initial production of which

remains in its kind unexampled in the history of the American theatre, and seldom parallelled elsewhere.

EVOLUTION OF ANARCHY; ANARCHISM AND "REPUBLICAN LAW"

We have already glimpsed the manuscript evolution of Anarchy. For a dozen years its theme—the faith in "republican law" as a solution of "liberty"—had taken on varied revisions of form under its author's pen. First conceived, it had probably seemed no more than a stage theme involving a deft plot, of romantic appeal as melodrama, historic and dreamily remote. Now, suddenly, its latent message leapt into a startling timeliness—as an appeal of reality, indigenous and immediate—owing to the explosion of a bomb in Chicago, attributed to so-called "Anarchists," whose philosophic doctrines disclaimed any real solution for "liberty" through "republican law." The Chicago Anarchists case held the public imagination for about a year, beginning in the autumn of '86. The "philosophic" condemnation of their doctrines by his fellow Americans was feelingly shared by Steele MacKaye, but the public outcry condemning the anarchic "philosophers" themselves to the gallows was as feelingly opposed and denounced by him at the time, in several letters to the press and in personal appeals before volunteer committees. We have already seen how William Dean Howells joined him in protest at such a meeting with Judge Pryor.*-In a a letter to the New York World, my father wrote:

"Mankind is subject to periodical attacks of political insanity. . . . The triumph of Anarchism in 1794 destroyed the new-born Republic of France. . . . To make martyrs of madmen—who have great cause for their madness—is to throw around their mania the seductive glamour of heroism, and to sublimate their cause to that crowd of irrational children which constitutes the great mass of the people. . . . In the name of the immortal heroes, who founded and preserved our national institutions, I protest against the execution of the Chicago Anarchists as a national folly and a natonal disgrace."

It was, however, not as "committeeman," nor as journalist, but as dramatist, that MacKaye felt called upon to speak out.

"The theme of my play," he said, in an interview, "is really the danger of liberty. This theme is formulated in the play but once, and in these words of the hero to the woman he loves, when she is pleading with him to fly from France. He silences her by saying: 'I must stay to war with beasts who bring disgrace upon our noble cause. The

^{*} Cf. page ii, 96.

torch of liberty, which should light mankind to progress, when left in madmen's hands, kindles that blaze of anarchy whose only end is ashes.' . . .

"For many years, I have devoted myself to the mechanical, as well as to the artistic side of the theatre, in the hope that by improving stage mechanism I might help to develop the artistic ensemble essential to high art results in the theatre. To this end I have made numerous inventions and designed and built several theatres.-In this work I have been almost daily in contact with labourers and mechanics of every kind, and this contact stirred in me a very deep and sincere sympathy with these classes of men. I was led to realise the greatness of obligation under which the whole world is placed by the industry, ability and devotion to duty which characterise by far the larger portion of the working classes. . . . At the same time, through relations intimate and confidential, I became conscious that certain foreign ideas—the natural outgrowth of excessive poverty and despotism in the old world-were insinuating themselves into the hearts and minds of American labourers to an extent perilous to their own prosperity and to the very life of the republic."

On March 15, '87, his friend Dr. Edward Bradley, a prominent New York physician, wrote:

"My dear Steele: Everything is arranged for the reading of your play to-morrow eve, at 293 Fifth Avenue."

MEECH BROTHERS OF BUFFALO URGE BIRTHDAY PRODUCTION AT MACKAYE'S BIRTHPLACE

At this author's-reading of Anarchy to a group of citizens deeply interested in the Chicago Anarchist situation, there were present several men of the theatrical profession, among whom were John H. and Henry L. Meech, owners of the Academy of Music, at Buffalo, N. Y. Of these John Hendrickson Meech (father of the admirably gifted actor, Owen Meech, now of the Players Club, New York) had been a boy friend in Buffalo of young "Jim McKay" who, that evening in March, '87, was reading his play as the mature dramatist, Steele MacKaye.—Any connection with his childhood home, associated in memory with his mother whom he adored, was always very moving to my father. This chance reunion, therefore, with his old Buffalo friend, who had long felt "a romantic attachment" for his celebrated townsman, occasioned Henry Meech and his brother to urge that they might have the honour of presenting the première of MacKaye's new play at their own theatre in their common birthplace, assuring him that Buffalo took pride in "the city's native son" and would be glad to give ample token of it. Their verbal

request was soon followed by this unprecedented invitation, signed by the Mayor of Buffalo and twelve hundred leading citizens:

FORMAL INVITATION SIGNED BY 1200 LEADING CITIZENS

"Mr. Steele MacKaye, Dear Sir: We, the undersigned, citizens of Buffalo, recognising your genius and the fidelity with which you have devoted yourself to the best interests of the American Drama throughout your whole professional career, desire to testify our pride in you as a native of our city.—The completion of your latest drama, Anarchy, which bears upon one of the living and national issues of the day, and has already won the thoughtful admiration of many of the most expert judges of the metropolis, seems to afford to us an opportunity of

emphasising our regard for you.

"If this work, said to be the mature fruit of your long experience, has not gone beyond your control for earlier production in New York, we should like to have you grant us the privilege of securing its first appearance in this city, and of making its representation here an event that will be a tribute to a fellow townsman, and in some sort the recognition, from your many warm frends, of your national reputation as a dramatist.—Should you entertain our proposal favourably, we shall take pleasure not only in testifying our local pride in your career, but in making the occasion honourably profitable to you, and should you take a prominent part in the interpretation of that which you have already created, you will but add to our gratification." *

To this invitation my father replied:

"Gentlemen: . . . I cannot adequately express the gratitude I feel for the very great compliment paid to me by your invitation. The noblest recompense of any sincere endeavour is the recognition it may receive from those who represent the highest intelligence and character of the time in which the endeavour is made.—This recognition you have extended to me with a generosity and force of expression that make it infinitely precious and put me under profound obligations to you and

to my native city.

"In appreciation of this interest shown for my career as an American dramatist, I gladly accept your invitation and assure you that the production shall be a manifestly sincere effort to prove my deep sense of the high honour conferred upon me, through your kind offices, by the beautiful city in which it was my privilege to be born. . . . Although I have arranged for the production of Anarchy at the opening of next season in New York, I am happily enabled to promise that its first presentation shall occur in Buffalo, at the Academy of Music, where it will be performed for one week, commencing on the 30th of May next.—In deference to your expressed desire, I willingly consent to return temporarily to the stage in the leading rôle of Anarchy, for this occasion adding the function of actor to that of author. . . . Hoping, gentle-

^{*} A partial list of the signers is included in Appendix.

men, that the performance of my play may not disappoint your expectations, nor in any way lead you to regret the generous compliment you have paid me, I remain, Sincerely yours, STEELE MACKAYE."

This invitation and its acceptance led to results uniquely significant. Performed in his native city, on the eve of his forty-fifth birthday,* the first production of Anarchy—written, directed and chief-rôled by the city's "home-welcomed son"—was the first civic-dramatic festival in honour of an American dramatist. For weeks beforehand "community participants" were being drilled in advance to perform the drama's mob of Sans Culottes, and the city was blazoned with festal announcements of the week's production.

PRODIGAL HOSPITALITY: "GUEST OF THE CITY"; "A FITTING RECOGNITION"

On the eve of the opening, "out of towners" journeyed to the event from neighbouring cities as far west as Chicago. From New York by railroad a special "limited" brought as festival guests a large delegation of critics, artists, journalists, society leaders and theatre "professionals," with other nabobs and "first nighters," under a largess of prodigal hospitality akin to the house warmings of old pioneer days.—As functions of the occasion, a general half-holiday was celebrated by the principal business houses of the city, and a great banquet was held in the dining hall of the Genesee Hotel, at which the author of Anarchy was greeted by brilliant representatives of the theatre, the city and the national government. An editorial in the Buffalo Courier at the time thus states the public spirit and critical estimate in which the dramatist was welcomed:

"The production in this city of Mr. Steele MacKaye's latest and much talked-of drama, Anarchy, is to assume the proportions of more than a dramatic event. A call of over one thousand of the best citizens of Buffalo upon the dramatist to permit the first production of his play here, to be made a testimonial to him, is we believe the first instance on record in this country of a city honouring a playwright in this manner.

"But it is not as a playwright alone that his friends honour him. It is rather as a philosopher and a teacher, who has used the drama as one—and we may add, the most powerful one—of several means to inculcate a principle, to establish art, and to place the whole empirical school of esthetics upon a rational and scientific basis.—With this view

^{*}The date of the first performance had first been planned for June 6th, his actual birthday, but owing to unavoidable exigencies the six night performances and two matinées were performed during the previous week, from May 30th to June 4th.

of Mr. MacKaye's labours, he quite surpasses the claim of the successful dramatist. . . . It may be said of Steele MacKaye, with strict justice, that he is one of the few men of our day who have brought to the much abused theatre the intelligence, the skill, the learning, and the genius, that it so much needs in an era of speculators, and buffoons. He has always been able and willing to take the pen, or the rostrum, whether at Harvard, or at Steinway Hall, and to expound the principles upon which he has so assiduously worked for the past fifteen years. . . . When a man of ideas and convictions comes into this field, he is entitled to something more than the gratulations of the pit and gallery, which are content so long as they are entertained. Consequently, Buffalo does a very fitting and handsome thing in giving to Mr. MacKaye the sober recognition which his persistent labour in behalf of a better drama deserves."

ANARCHY OPENS; "TRIUMPH COMPLETE"; "AMERICA'S MOST DISTINGUISHED PLAYWRIGHT"

The monthly magazine, The Theatre, featured the event with an issue mainly devoted to Steele MacKaye, in leading articles on the play and the career of its author, with several full-page illustrations, including the striking mob scene (drawn by Matt Morgan from a tableau of the actors as grouped by my father at rehearsals) here reproduced, on page 153.—Readers familiar with old rosters of distinguished actors will recognise the brilliant galaxy cited in this first-night report of The Theatre:

"On Monday evening, May 30, after elaborate preparation, Steele MacKaye's new play of *Anarchy* was produced in the Buffalo Academy of Music, with the following remarkable cast:

Duc de Beaumont Frederick de Belleville Marquis de Veaux, alias Gouroc Henry Lee Abbé de St. Simon John A. Lane Colonel La Hogue H. B. Bradley Carrac M. B. Snyder Aristides Potin Sidney Drew Jean Litais B. T. Ringgold	Paul Kauvar Steele MacKaye General Roche Jacquelein Eben Plympton
Abbe de St. Simon John A. Lane Colonel La Hogue H. B. Bradley Carrac M. B. Snyder Aristides Potin Sidney Drew	
Abbe de St. Simon John A. Lane Colonel La Hogue H. B. Bradley Carrac M. B. Snyder Aristides Potin Sidney Drew	
Carrae	Abbê de St. SimonJohn A. Lane
Carrae	Colonel La Hogue
	Carrac
Jean Litais	
General Kleber Jerome Stevens	
BourdotteJulian Mitchell	
Goujon EDWARD M. HURD	Goujon Edward M. Hurd
Diane de Beaumont GENEVIEVE LYTTON	
Nanette Potin MAY IRWIN	
Denise Marie Hartley	
Scarlotte *MAUD_HOSFORD	
Aline *Alice Hamilton	Aline *ALICE HAMILTON

^{*} The last two were acted by gifted pupils of MacKaye: Maud Hosford afterward acted with Maude Adams; Alice King Hamilton became the well-known novelist, Mrs. A. N. Williamson, author (with her English husband) of *The Lightning Conductor*, etc.

"The theatre was crowded by an audience representing the best thought of a cultured city. Among them were many well-known New Yorkers, and prominent critics of New York, Boston and Chicago. All were gathered by a positive, sincere interest in the man who has become America's most distinguished playwright. . . . Steele Mac-Kaye's triumph was complete, in an event that will remain notable in theatre-history henceforth."

These further comments, representative of many scores in like tenor, give a sense of the occasion and the play:

Buffalo Express:—"The audience was a proud representation of Buffalo's culture, wealth and fashion. . . . Plaudits . . . flowers . . . bravos . . . persistent spontaneity demanding constant recalls . . . testified more than words. It was a proud night for Steele MacKaye."

- N. Y. World:—"The performance, of unusual magnitude, held the large assemblage till nearly one o'clock. The dramatic intensity, the constant succession of incidents, the splendour of ensemble, the notable brilliancy of the cast and staging made a genuinely profound impression. . . The play is absolute melodrama without a gleam of comedy. But its serious, at times almost ghastly, interest is sustained through five acts by consummate ingenuity in the use of tableaux and situations.—After the terrible mob-scene, the tumult of approbation was something extraordinary."
- N. Y. Dramatic News:—"Anarchy is a melodrama vastly superior to any play of that type for the last ten years. Its success does not depend on the ingenuity of the stage carpenter, but rests on solid merit. The plot is deft, the interest never-flagging. Mr. MacKaye has not only written a fine play; he has produced it with artistic completeness in vivid stage pictures."

The Theatre (June 27, '87):—"There is enough material in Anarchy to make half a dozen plays. . . . My judgment is not hasty. . . . I saw Anarchy seven times. I studied every detail; every line . . . the ingenuity of thought . . . the climaxes. . . . I sat electrified, thrilled by its dramatic composition. . . . Hundreds of people were being turned away nightly; thousands were unable to obtain seats. Had it been given this momentum in New York, Anarchy would go on for a year."

Buffalo Daily News:—"The production of Anarchy is a great event in the history of the local stage—one of the greatest. . . . Historically considered, Mr. MacKaye's production is that of a student rather than of a sensationalist. None but a student would have given to the royalists of La Vendée—among the greatest victims of a mistaken principle in history—the honour they merit. . . . Buffalo has seldom if ever seen a more fashionable audience. Mr. MacKaye's every appearance brought salvos of applause . . . particularly vigorous at the dream-scene pantomime, the dreaded guillotine in operation. Not least appreciated was the work of Edgar Stillman Kelley, composer of the overture."

Of the music, it is gratifying to record this early recognition of its eminent composer, in a review by the critic of the Buffalo Express (May 31, '87):

"The musicians were directed in the overture by its composer, Mr. Edgar S. Kelley, whose work must be measured by no ordinary standard. It was a symphonic poem. In itself was told the whole story of Anarchy. Its opening measures were illustrative of inchoate society, uncivilisation-a weird minor droning, beginning in the double basses and 'cellos, sweeping upward through the strings. To this succeeded a luminous theme from a woodwind, like a ray of light penetrating the darkness. . . . Then came the theme of love, which afterward prefaced the heroine's entrance . . . succeeded by the storm of passion, in which the brass took share, in the measures of which Anarchy took full sway and sat in triumph on the throne of power. Then, tumbling from this eminence, after a fruitless struggle for the realm, the minor strains of the first theme succeeded, and society sank to the level whence it rose. Here were progress, development, struggle, victory, climax, and calamity told in music.—The incidental music was chiefly from these themes, suited to the action, as Paul Kauvar's entrance was heralded by a certain figure, and the onslaught of the mob was accompanied by the anarchic theme. Rarely is such music written for a play, and rarely is a composer's baton accessory to a dramatic first night."

A few bars from this music (the *Diane*, heroine theme), reproduced from a manuscript copy, made for me by my old friend, the composer, in 1925, are included among illustrations in this chapter.

STILLMAN-KELLEY ON "A MODERN IN MUSICO-DRAMATIC ART"

It was a fine distinction of this production of Anarchy that thereby my father thus helped to advance, by his first recognition in the east, the early career of a young American among the most permanently distinguished of our native composers.—In 1887, Edgar Stillman-Kelley had but recently come east from San Francisco, where his splendidly imaginative Macbeth suite had met with notable success, only to find the musical critics in New York cold or venomously adverse toward that and other work of his. Fearing harmful results from this upon my father's interest in him, the young composer called on Steele MacKave the next morning in some trepidation.—"Have I read your critics?" said my father. "Yes, my boy. Damn the critics! Here's what I think of them." -And he gave the young man his first large commission, to compose the incidental music for Anarchy. That encouragement is touched upon in the following recollection (written in 1925), by Edgar Stillman-Kelley himself:

"At an early period of my career, when I was a subject of much adverse criticism, I had the good fortune to be believed in by so eminent a personality as Steele MacKaye. Indeed so severely was I battered about at this time by my reviewers, that the unflinching confidence and subsequent friendship of this many-sided artist greatly helped to rescue me from complete discouragement. . . . My first interview with him was indeed a revelation; for here was a man whose idea of dramatic music was not merely the conventional 'blue lights tremolo,' but whose conception of the musico-dramatic problems was fully in accord with the most modern treatment of this phase of art. His description of the overture he wished written to Paul Kauvar (then called Anarchy) might have served as a basis for a Symphonic Poem.

"At the rehearsals, his mastery of detail was continually in evidence, his direction being impartially directed to the diction, gesture, lighting, and the adjustment of the music to the action.—In this play he invented the phantasmal effect of a vision, where the hero dreams of his beloved Diane at the Guillotine. . . . At the festival production of this play at Buffalo, in honour of his birthday, we who took part in the production were all his guests (at the Genesee House); and, after the rehearsals and performances, our gatherings at dinner, or at midnight supper, often assumed the character of a literary symposium.—His dissertations on the beautiful arts and their interrelationship were inspiring, and showed that his creative work, when finally put forth, had been subjected to the test of severe self-criticism. Rich, too, was his fund of anecdotes and of personal adventures."

MACKAYE'S "UNFORGETTABLE" BANQUET: GALA WEEK AND FINALE

Concerning the first night and its gala banquet my cousin, Frank B. Steele,* of Buffalo, himself an accomplished "amateur dramatist," has written me (1924):

"At the Fillmore Hotel, its proprietors had asked us to meet your mother and father and your wonderful brother, Will—afterward my dear friend, with whom I was photographed at MacKaye Castle.† Your father invited me, with my brother Charlie, to the opening—a truly great performance of splendid actors, several of whom were distinguished 'stars.' Among them your father, as Paul Kauvar, was magnificent in his impassioned scenes, tender in the love scenes—altogether superb in that rare list of gifted players. . . . After the play, Charlie and I went behind the scenes, where your father took us both in his arms, and gave us a big hug, exclaiming: 'These Steele boys—these Steele boys!' You may imagine how we basked in reflected glory for weeks afterward! . . . At the banquet ‡ we had the time of our young

^{*} Frank B. Steele, son of Charles Gould Steele, and grandson of Oliver Gray Steele (cf. page i, 1, 36), is Secretary-General of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and is still a resident of Buffalo.

[†] Reproduced as illustration in Prologue, Vol. I. Cf. footnote on page 35.

‡ Among the speakers at this banquet were U. S. Attorney-General Daniel N. Lockwood, "the great nominator," of Buffalo; from New York—Judge Charles Daniels, of the Supreme Court; A. C. Wheeler, dramatic critic of

lives. Your father presided in his wonderfully brilliant way. It lasted long and late. I remember Charlie and I wandered down Genesee Street and saw the dawn breaking palely—after the most dazzling night in all our local firmament."

Read at this banquet were telegrams and letters from Roscoe Conkling, Marquis de Mores, Horace Porter, Geoffrey Hawley, Arthur E. Miller, John A. Cockerell, editor of the World, Charles A. Dana, editor of the Sun, E. Lambert, editor of the Tribune.

E. H. Sothern and "Jim" Piggott sent this joint telegram: "We reiterate our good wishes for a very great success." Henry E. Dixey wired: "May Anarchy be a bomb in the drama of the present day, and may you live long to enjoy the sparks!" Robert G. Ingersoll telegraphed: "From the bottom of my heart I wish you the greatest and most perfect success. In advance I congratulate you, and hope that you have in this play poured the accomplishments of many years."

The rest of this gala week was filled for MacKaye with social festivities by day (including a reception at "The Castle," his birthplace, and a trip to Niagara), and by night with tumultuous performances at the theatre, from which "literally thousands had to be turned away." A final glimpse of him is reported, as he left the stage door on Saturday midnight, when a great crowd of citizens, led by those who had acted the French Revolutionary mob in his play, greeted him with a clamour of *Bravos* and *Huzzas*.

"By this greeting," says the report, "the gifted author-actor was visibly affected, and responded by a felicitous little speech. Steele MacKaye seems to have the happy faculty of making friends of all about him."

FIRST "CIVIC-THEATRE" FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF AN AMERICAN DRAMATIST Reviewing some of the causes and meanings of this civic event, a Buffalo editor wrote, at the time:

"The large-scale circumstances attending this event are unique in theatrical annals, at least in America. Mr. Steele MacKaye comes to Buffalo as a guest of the city, and this is the first time an American city has risen up with a testimonial of honour for its native dramatist.—This honour is conferred by the city upon one of its own children, who

the World; Lawrence Jerome, Hon. Thomas P. Ochiltree, ex-Congressman; Judge John R. Brady, President of the Lambs; T. Henry French, of the Metropolitan Opera House; Clay M. Greene, dramatist; Deshler Welch, editor of The Theatre magazine; A. L. Dithmar, dramatic critic of the Times; Moses P. Handy, President of the Philadelphia Clover Club, and Commodore John T. Dickerson.

has made a national reputation by working assiduously for years to advance the cause of Art, and to provide to the American Theatre a worthy stage literature. . . . As a dramatist, Mr. MacKaye has been singularly successful. Out of thirteen dramas constructed and produced by him to date, not more than two can be said to have failed. . . . Reproduced, year after year, in every American city, Hazel Kirke has been acted in England and Australia, and has been translated into French, German and Spanish. . . . Anarchy, a noble and original work, worthy of any country, is squarely abreast of one of the greatest problems of our century. . . . But Mr. MacKaye is more than a dramatist. In the best sense, he is a reformer, of whom it may be stated, without the least exaggeration, that he has done more of practical good for the contemporaneous American theatre than any man in the profession."

If the "civic theatre," * in its true communal sense, shall ever evolve into actual being in our country, this civic event at Buffalo, in conjunction with some others of my father's public life, will constitute a pioneering landmark in that evolution.—As on his first public appearances in Boston and New York, sixteen years earlier, so now in his mid career, an altogether extraordinary recognition of dramatic art, in its relation to civic society, had been called forth and expressed in formal terms by leading citizens, through the personal powers and vision of Steele MacKaye, as an artist-citizen.

In mediæval times, when communal life expressed itself instinctively in festivals dedicated to art, tributes to creative artists as community leaders were common to the civilisation of Europe, which has handed down even to our day sporadic instances of these. So, for their services as dramatists to the theatre of their countries, Hauptmann—in Germany, Ibsen—in Scandinavia, Rostand—in France, d'Annunzio—in Italy, have in recent times been recipients of such native honours from their fellow countrymen. In American history, however, this civic tribute of 1887 to a native dramatist—with its outpouring of public goodwill and local pride in national achievement—remains an unique example of those ancient forces of socialized expression.

SEA VACATION: SWORD-FISHING; "EXCITING ADVENTURES"

It is one of my permanent regrets that (being still at school in New York) I was not myself present during that festal week in Buffalo, though the following season I attended many scores of the

^{*}This term, "Civic Theatre," was first coined and used by me in my early lectures (1906-1909), and was first put in print in the preface of my volume, The Playhouse and the Play (Macmillan, 1909).

New York performances, and "suped" in several.—Returning with my mother and my brother Will, in early June, to New York, my father—overbrimming still with festal spirit—proposed to take the whole family on a yachting spree.—"Fine!" said my mother, "and we'll christen the yacht 'Anarchy'!"—So we all of us made a Mac-Kaye-clan excursion to Manhattan Beach, where my father chartered a sailing vessel, in which we cruised for one long Neptunian day—to the ultima thule of my father's pocketbook and the Elysian bournes of memory.

That summer was passed by my father partly on the salt water, partly in the mountains, at Dublin, N. H., where (preceding him there) I received from him this letter, written on a fishing cruise "off Block Island, at sea, July 20th, 1887,"—perhaps the only boyishly care-free letter I ever received from him:

"My precious boy. . . . Yesterday we got one swordfish, that fought desperately-and weighed 182 lbs. This kind of fishing is the most exciting sport imaginable. The fish is seen lying upon the top of the water, where the boat tries to creep upon it before it can get away. One man is stationed at the masthead; another, with harpoon, at the end of the bowsprit, in what is termed a pulpit. Another man steers, while two others stand ready at the ropes to handle them quickly, in the chase. . . . When the swordfish is discovered in the distance by the man at the mast-top, he directs the working of the boat so as to bring the bowsprit directly over the fish.—There the bowsprit-man drives the harpoon into the creature, which starts madly off-or turns on the boat and tries to drive its enormous sword through the boat's side. The harpoon is attached to a very long line—the line to an empty air-tight keg-so, when the fish runs away, he carries out the line, and the kegthrown into the water-dances frantically over the waves, chased by the boat. . . . After a while the fish is tired out, the keg captured, the fish drawn to the side of the boat, where it is instantly killed by a long lance. I cannot describe to you the excitement of getting near enough to strike the fish-nor the mad delight of trying to catch the keg. They are now raising the anchor for another chase;—the day is lovely and we ought to have luck. I must close, to send this letter ashore. I hope to get to you in Dublin shortly.-In deepest love, your father-Steele MacKaye."

A few days later he wrote to my mother in Dublin, with subconscious zests of ancestral Loring sea-captains:

"I am now a first-rate sailor and fisherman—never so well and strong before in my life. This way of living agrees with me exactly.—I am sure my ancestors must have lived for hundreds of years on the sea.*... We start this afternoon for Cape Cod and deep-sea fishing. We have

^{*} Cf. page i, 48.

caught 19 swordfish and sold them at an average of eight dollars each. These have paid the expenses of our trip and we are a very jolly crowd. . . . Address letters to Block Island. I hope dear Hal will be with you when I get to Dublin. . . . I go to Newport for a day, then to join you. I look forward to all my precious ones with inexpressible delight. How happy I am to think how well and happy you all are at Dublin! Tell the dear boys I hope to be a boy once more with them there. Tell Percy I shall bring a lot of swords as trophies of our chase at sea. . . . We have had exciting adventures I shall delight in reciting, when you are all gathered again about me.—Always, in reverence for the best of women, your—James."

REUNIONS; DUBLIN; A BOY FIGHT: "ANARCHY THRONED ON PLUTOCRACY"

These joyous anticipations were as joyously fulfilled. There were no more rapturous hours in the lives of his children than those of reunion with their father on his home coming. He had toward us a loving eagerness that kindled its own response in kind. run his errands was to receive an imperial honour. Satiety knew not his whereabouts. Indeed all times in his company were romantically keen-edged, but the moment of his return from absence was a pang of sentient joy almost fearful in anticipation. On this return of his to Dublin in '87, I remember such a pang—as I rushed down the path, losing off my red crocheted tam-o'-shanter as I sprang into the great hug of his arms. Then followed the joys of his kept promises-unpacking of the long swordfish swords, still rank of salt brine, and the masterful reciting of his recent deep-sea adventures.—Somewhere still I have one of those bone sword-blades, the large end notched by him for a wooden handle, so that I might wield it in Quixotic battles of boy-prowess.

That sword, however, was not in my hand, when I engaged at Dublin in a memorable boy-fight, watched by my father with an impartial but twinkling eye of judgeship. A fight I call it because, though it began with a casual wrestling match, it ended in a bout of clutching arms and legs, mud-spattered hair and wildly bursting collar-bands, as I rolled uppermost on my boy antagonist in the roadside gutter.—My antagonist was young André Champollion,* great-grandson of the French archæologist, who discovered the "Rosetta Stone"—key to the Egyptian hieroglyphics. André's American grandfather, Austin Corbin, the millionaire, was then staying next door to us (where we were boarding, at "Mrs. Rice's,"

^{*} Afterward André Champollion became a promising artist. He made me a delightful visit at my home in Cornish, N. H., shortly before he served in the Great War, in which he died, having won distinguished honours as an officer.

in Dublin), on his way to found his since-famous Corbin Park wildgame preserve at Croyden Mountain, New Hampshire.

Austin Corbin himself was sitting beside my father on a stone wall, joint judge with him of this wrestling bout of their boy relatives. For a moment the issue seemed in doubt. André squirmed heroically to turn me undermost, but I managed to keep stubbornly in the saddle, straddling the young heir of millions in a dramatic climax.

"Time!" said my father. "That will do, Percy.—There, Corbin," he added with a twinkle, "you behold a symbolic tableau: Anarchy throned on Plutocracy!"

"You misconstrue it," smiled Corbin. "In your line, MacKaye, Anarchy implies art. I'd call the picture—Art subduing Archaeology."

VISTAS: A STONE IN THE WOOD-PATH: GEORGE GREY BARNARD

The old roads and hills of Dublin are haunted for me with dream-like memories of my father, kindred, and friends through fleeting years. That summer of '87, near the Monroes' summer house where, twelve years earlier, he had begun the writing of Hazel Kirke, I see my father standing, his right arm extended toward Monadnock, intently directing some workmen how to cut a vista through trees below, the tops of which were "growing out" that splendid view of the mountain beyond the lake. There, down the wood path to the lake, I glimpse him again, with my brother Will, scrambling joyously through

"Golden and green lights, glancing through Their heaven of many a tangled hue,"

to the lakeside boat-house, for a canoe-paddle along the garnet-sanded shoals.—On a stepping-stone of that wood path Will had carved his initials, W. P. M. A decade later, in that same path, I see my dear friend, the sculptor, George Grey Barnard (who married Edna Monroe),—his sun-bright hair upstanding like the curls of a faun—carving in the earth with a pine stick the outlines of his "Temple of Humanity": a vision he has since been moulding in varied forms of marble and bronze.—Again two decades pass, and George Barnard writes to me this letter (from Dublin, August 20, 1916), reminiscent of that spirit who "dying" in youth, remains a "living" part of this memoir, in my father's career as my own:—

"Very dear Percy—Here I am in the nest, where your dear ones and mine were nested thro' many a sunny summer. Every day my chil-

dren and I go down the path thro' the wood, and every day I see in the path the stone—W. P. M.—that seems suspended there in the path like a golden humming-bird, that you meet of a sudden in a garden's walk, that looks your soul thro', as he hangs with invisible wings between Heaven and Earth. . . . So that stone hangs in the garden of thought, Percy, divine in gold and green, with eyes from the soul of what was past, what is now, what will be in the future. His initials are carved deep in the stone on the path thro' the woods. His name, his heart's name, is carved deep in lives of those who knew him, so that they too step over stones in the path of life, lightly, more easily, because of his passing—High and Noble Will!" *

RICHARD BURTON, POET: MACKAYE ON ROBERT BROWNING; WILL MACKAYE, "HYPERION"

At Dublin, also, I recall my first glimpse of Richard Burton, alert and earnest-eyed, somewhat shyly reading from his early poems to my mother, under a great elm tree. Professor at the University of Minnesota, and Crusader-at-large for the drama of ideals, he has since infused in many thousands of a new generation the virile love of beauty his poetry attests. He, too, refers to my brother, Will, in this recollection he has written of my father:

"In the summer of 1887, to Dublin, N. H., long my summer home, came Steele MacKaye for a brief visit. I welcomed the chance to meet the author of *Hazel Kirke* (and of much else of pioneer importance in the American Theatre), for—like all theatre-goers of my generation—I had wept and thrilled in front of that fine comedy. . . . At the Monroe cottage, after a magnificent sunset, enjoyed on the rustic porch,† we went inside for music and for fine book talk. Here Steele MacKaye became central, by reason of natural brilliance.

"I can see him now, his lithe, athletic form, boylike in his impetuous enthusiasm; his fine, brown eyes flashing fire; the mane of black hair pushed impatiently back, as he paced the floor—like a caged lion, and talked of Robert Browning—like an angel, with a flow, a fervour, a fluency of quotation, a sonorous beauty of voice, and a high ideality that remain with me down all the years. . . . As oral interpreters of Browning, Mrs. Lemoyne, Hiram C. Corson of Cornell, and Mark Twain were all notable; but none was the superior of Steele MacKaye.—As he strode up and down the living-room, that evening, he seemed to me—and I am sure he was—a rarely magnificent human being, such as one meets only once or twice (if indeed ever again) in a lifetime.

† That "rustic porch" (still there) was designed by Steele MacKaye.

^{*}This letter concludes with the following reference, which hints of a continuation of my father's life of art in a work of my own: "Twice, late at night, when in New York, I had to take a street car at 137th St. It was lonely beyond words standing there before the great walls of the College Stadium, behind which so much beauty and life had been thro' your creation, Caliban, when last I was there. I felt the value of art as rarely before. Yours was Life, this empty shell—Death."

"There also I hold clear in recollection my contact with the beautiful personality of Will MacKaye, Percy's older brother, whose life was soon after to be untimely lost, in his profession of player. He was, in the strictest sense of an abused word, an *ideal* youth; nobly sensitive, refined, of great charm and dignity, well-nigh an Hyperion to look upon: an almost unbelievable compound of qualities desirable in man, but seldom seen. That late-evening conversation has long since been laid away in lavender by me, and is still of unfaded fragrance. . . . So to-day, as I study with my college classes Percy MacKaye's The Scarecrow and Mater, I tell them not alone of the author, but make him the more atmospheric for them by reviving these memories of his wonderful father and brother."

That summer of '87, with its brief week or ten days of vacation at Dublin, was one of the very few periods of haven from worry and of stalwart health in my father's career: a last serene isle of refuge in his battling and tempestuous life-passage.

A GREEN ISLE OF THE YEARS; COL. MACKAYE'S COAT-OF-ARMS

On this green isle of the years, he was now surrounded by an alluring tide of success, momentarily tranquil, imaged with brighthued triumphs and anticipations; and there he had gathered about him all he held fondest—his still-unbroken family and a veritable retinue of friends, whose stanch circle concealed from view whatever of baffled hopes and battling dreams lay hidden within distant storm-banks that, before another summer, were to break in windtorn racks over the remainder of his days.—Of this circle, his old father, the Colonel, though absent, was still a robust figure. From Paris, where he had returned the spring before, he wrote greetings of affectionate satisfaction in his son's fresh laurels in that old frontier town near Niagara, where he himself had first adventured on foot, as a lad of twelve, to wrest his own victories in pre-Civil War times.

On his last visit to New York, in that year, I recall vividly my father's father in his superb old age, descending—elegantly erect—the winding stairs from my Aunt Emily's roof-studio at the Chelsea Hotel, to the deep-carpeted floor of her music room, overlooking all Manhattan.—Below his thick white hair, his strong-browed eyes shone kindly keen, as he led me to the window, where—like an Admiral of all the Atlantic fleet—he looked off toward the Battery and the far-gleaming harbour of ships.—In an earlier memory, I sat on his knee, while he drew from his coloured waistcoat a large, gold chronometer-watch, embossed with our clan coat-of-

arms, with its Hand-and-Dagger and Wolves' heads. Holding it near to his face and mine, he mysteriously blew open the case with a puff from his lips—twinkling a solemn archness at my piqued curiosity.—Copied from that very case, that coat-of-arms is stamped on the cover of this volume.—My grandfather was gently grave, deep-mellow-voiced, commanding—a born prime minister of intellectuality and benevolence. That gold watch of his—later worn by my brother, Will, and by my father—has been wound by me every night for thirty years, reminding me, in the stillness before sleep, of those brave heart-beats its relentless tickings have survived.

The brief vacation of my father at Dublin sped as relentlessly—his final sojourn on those resinous New Hampshire hills. One last glimpse of old Monadnock, whose grand contours he had painted and climbed and exulted in, during those summer noons and twilights of his youth when his tame crow flew before him, like Odin's bird, toward illimitable visions of art—"the mystery of emotion," and "the new age of the Initiate," one last gaze from the little railroad station at Keene, where he had landed in '77 with his "carload" of MacKaye boys, secretaries, nurses, lady-pupils, "Aunt Sadie," wife, babes and barking dog—and Steele MacKaye was once more returning to the August heat of New York and to theatrical business in the cabin of a sailing yacht.—From "Hotel Dam, Union Square, August 18th, '87," he wrote back to my mother:

"I have seen Sanger and settled for production of play to follow Booth and Barrett—probably by 15th of Jan., 1888. . . . Meech Bros. were not able to meet me here, and cannot come on till Sept.—Horrible heat; I am off to-night for the yacht. I enclose letter from Mrs. Tom Taylor." *

On August 30th, '87, my mother wrote to him: "This is my last day in Dublin, and to-morrow I hope to be with the darlings in Shirley—in time to partake of dear little Hazel's postponed feast. I wish I could take to her her Papa, as a birthday present! . . . Send your next letters to Shirley, Mass., care of Mr. Henry A. Pevear. I am sorry for you on the yacht in this weather—rain, rain, rain, outwearying! But after all, we have had a lovely summer—Thank God for it!"

^{*} This letter from Amersham, Bucks, England, was prelusive to an American sojourn of Mrs. Tom Taylor and her daughter Lucy, who visited us, that fall, in New York. At Block Island, that summer, my father completed a version of his play, A Noble Rogue. From there he wrote to my mother (August 26th): "I shall not be able to get to Shirley, as next week is about my last on the yacht, out of New York. Will join you later."

FIRST GLIMPSES OF SHIRLEY—OUR "STOKE POGES" OF PEACE

In those excerpts I have italicised a name, here mentioned for the first time—a magic name thereafter for all of us—a name whose very sound chimes in our family memory with a hallowed tone of tranquilness akin to that of the "little town" in the old Christmas carol—our little hamlet of haven in exodus from city walls and towers of perturbation—Shirley, of the serene uplands of Massachusetts, looking toward sunrise beyond the grey-blue slopes of Harvard and the white hill-spires of Groton, and toward sundown upon Wachusett, across the dark green pitch-pines of old Lunenberg, and the elms of Lancaster.—Here, ere long (and for long years onward), shared with our "Aunt Sadie," the children of Steele and Mary MacKaye were to cherish, for the first time, a home of their very own—to my father, while he lived, the only unrented home he had ever possessed.

Our Shirley of "glimmering landscape" is the drowsy centre of its township-a "Stoke Poges" of peace, nestled under the delicate wooden belfry of the Revolutionary meeting-house, beside the grev headstones of "rude forefathers," asleep near the quiet common of crossroads, circled by their old homes. There still to-day their children's children dwell as old neighbours in spare simplicity, passing (in those days of the 'Eighties) from the green-shuttered store, afoot, or in cart and "democrat," toward farm and orchard, through the five grass-rutted roadways-exits and entrances there of the four pine-fragrant winds. On one of these roads, shaded by old maples, fourth on the left from the common, as neighbour Avers or Holden leads his milch-cow to pasture, or as Alvin Lawton, the village Abe Lincoln, drives north with baskets for water-lilies, there -glimpsed under the archings of old apple boughs-a little white cottage, once upon a time. . . . But that fairy tale of our home must wait for another chapter.

On the last day of August, '87—to join "Aunt Sadie," my younger brother, Benton, and sister, Hazel—my mother, Will and I left Dublin, N. H., for Shirley Common, where we all came on a visit to be near my "Aunt Sadie's" brother—the "Henry A. Pevear" of my mother's letter, a wealthy pioneering Yankee of Lynn, President of the Thompson Huston Electric Company (now merged with the General Electric).—He lived in the old "Squire" Whitney Mansion—ample, square and white—fronting the common, under enormous elms. We then boarded in another neat

white house next the churchyard, with Mr. John Curtis Ayers, a Civil War veteran, who lives there vet.

On that first morning, when I sprang from bed to the front window, awakened from huge night-dreams of circus-riding the hills on my Cousin Henry's saddle-horses, nine-abreast-I caught my first glimpse, through green maple leaves, of that grey-weathered belfry of our fairy tale.-Little then I dreamed that there in the old church beneath it I should one day be married to her who, even as I write these words by the winter fireside of another room on that common, is now beside me-co-maker with me of this epic story.* Still near by (in 1926) is the same little white store-post-office, kept by the same trusty citizen, "Johnny" Farrar, who handed out—through the same little pigeonhole cabinet of letter-boxes this note to my mother, dated at "The Lambs, New York, Sept. 2, 1887," from my father, reflecting the dark-bright "Rembrandt" moods of his strange story:

NEW PLAY; A SON OF MAMMON; ANARCHY'S MOB AND THE MASS SPIRIT

"So sorry I could not get to Shirley. Interests I am trying to develop here will keep me constantly busy .- Money means peace, health, hope for future. To secure that I must fight while strength remains.—Age creeps on me with horrible velocity. I have only a few years more that are of any use. Before they pass, I hope to earn the right to rest and look in serenity at the fight, as I myself sink out of sight. . . . Deepest love to all our dear ones-but none so deep as that I send to you, the brayest, best and perhaps, considering the glorious crowd she has given to the world—the best-beloved of all."

(P. S.—"Later")—"Prospects here good. Have plotted strong play for Davenport.† Am settled at Union Square, where I shall stay till all are back. Keep the children in country as long as possible. City air very depressing. . . . Anarchy ‡ is sure of a splendid opening here. Do not worry about anything. Prospects were never so bright.

God bless you!"

* In that same Revolutionary church (cf. Chapter XXIII) on July 11, 1923 (my mother's 78th birthday), my son, Robert Keith MacKaye, was married to Lavinia Gould MacBride, of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

† This play was probably the same referred to in The N. Y. Daily Graphic, Dec. 7, '87, as follows: "Mr. MacKaye's busy brain has nearly completed a new play. It will be called A Son of Mammon, and will deal with the money-making element, with the methods of whom this man of thought has little average the?"

little sympathy."

‡ At a matinée, on Oct. 19, 1887, at the Bijou Opera House (during Dixey's run of Adonis there), Julia Marlowe made her first New York appearance on the stage as Parthenia in "Ingomar." Concerning this significant début of hers it is stated, in Julia Marlowe, Her Life and Art (D. Appleton, 1926), that Miss Marlowe received numerous "offers from managers while the performance was on, or immediately afterward, and the best of these was to take the leading of the control of the contro ing rôle in Steele MacKaye's new play, called 'Anarchy.'" That leading rôle (Diane) was first acted in New York by Miss Annie Robe, Dec. 24, 1887.

Reference to this "sure opening" was made by the New York Graphic, which reproduced in its issue of Dec. 7, '87, a large engraving of my father, seated with manuscript at his desk. Under caption of "The Man Who Has Given the American Stage Its Strongest Impulse," the long article began:

"Steele MacKaye is the highest exemplar in this country of dramatic thought. The strongly national impulses that formulate his writings are his by heredity, for he comes of one of the oldest American families.

. . . Even now, when he fills such a large part in the American drama, he is only in his forty-fifth year, although that fact may surprise many who know that one of his sons, William Payson MacKaye, is leading man in Kate Claxton's company. . . . It was intended to open the new Forty-Second Street Theatre with his latest play, Anarchy, but it is now probable it will have an earlier Metropolitan production than would thus be given it."

This earlier opening was set for Dec. 24th, at the Standard Theatre, Broadway and 33rd Street, and the name of the play was altered to Paul Kauvar.

"The play," said my father, in an interview, "was first called Paul Kauvar, or Anarchy. Then I thought Anarchy would be the best title, and under that I produced it in Buffalo. Between that production and the New York opening, the Chicago Anarchists were hanged, and to avoid a possible charge of trading on that event, I went back to my first title." *

The text of the play had benefited by revisions of the author, based on the experience of its week's run at Buffalo, and on several weeks of rehearsal in New York. In these rehearsals, the drilling of the mob was given unwearied personal attention by my father, as its function was unprecedentedly important to the success of the play.

For Paul Kauvar was the first American play (perhaps the first modern play) technically builded upon mass effects in production, visual and aural; that is, the large ensemble situations, the half-distinguishable dialogue of the mob (which appears in no printed or manuscript text), the tempo and flux of its rhythmic sound-surges were structurally (as in later kindred usages of Rostand's Cyrano and Hauptmann's The Weavers) intrinsic parts of the plot and motivation, not introduced for mere whirling clamour and

^{*&}quot;I am glad," wrote Gen. Horace Porter (Dec. 19, '87), to MacKaye, "that you changed the name from Anarchy. It might have caused the play to be 'hung up'!"

spectacle, but to clarify and impersonate dramatic significances of the play's national folk-theme.—So, in this play, permeating the whole glowing conflict of its individuals, the mass-spirit of the French Revolution surged with the mob of Paris, clutching hands with the mass-spirit of the American audience. Through chinks of stage "wings," as a boy, I watched often that huge staring breathlessness—the Audience—with a kind of awe, while listening to my father's thrilling voice, in the lines:

"The torch of liberty that should light mankind to progress, when left in madmen's hands, kindles that blaze of anarchy, whose only end is ashes."

Tiptoeing then to meet him at his exit, I would accompany his powerful form, gracious in "Empire" garb and dark, flowing locks, along the dim walls of huddled scenery to his dressing room, and there catch from his eyes and features something of that deep conflict of a people, which stirred still fitfully in his strong, mobile face, as in a dream. More than once, I took part in the mob myself.—The importance which my father ascribed to that ensemble function in his play is evident from these words of his own in a published interview:

"There is another exceedingly important character in my play—a many-headed character, the Mob. I had a grand mob in Buffalo. I spent three weeks in rehearsing it. Its members, men and women, alike, were not only perfect in the 'business' of the scene, but even in the inflections and intonations of voice. . . . In training the mob, I begin drilling a group of two persons; then I take four, then eight, and so on."

BELASCO DESCRIBES "FIRST THRILLING THEATRE MOB"; MACKAYE CREATING IT

A striking impression of the mob in the first New York production, and of my father rehearsing it, has been described to me by David Belasco from his personal recollection.* Rising, and acting out the details of which he spoke, with a dramatic intensity and a manner so vividly suggesting Steele MacKaye's that it seemed momentarily my father stood there before me, Mr. Belasco said to me—with a rapid fluency of speech, which these hasty jottings I then made of his words can here only suggest:

"Let me tell you something, Percy MacKaye: When your father produced his *Paul Kauvar*, he designed an amazing mob scene. *It was the** In my April, 1925, interview with Mr. Belasco, quoted on pages i, 374, 443, 471-475.

first genuine, thrilling mob we ever had. They thought they had a mob, years later (Conried did), at the German Theatre-but it was nothing to compare to Steele MacKaye's. The ensemble of the present day does not compare with your father's. In rehearsal, he was a master -the master-spirit of the whole. . . . That mob of Paul Kauvar! It was a surging, thrilling, hideous mob, where every one had to act like a great artist to the minutest detail. There were women, men, children, old people-sprawling, starving-and wild, frenzied leaders-tremendous!

"He himself-your father-was working, working, at rehearsalslosing his voice. He had the patience of Job-working, always working, to perfect the ensemble. He would act it all, himself: shake, totter-speak like a plaintive woman, or a little, wailing child; or deep -like a clarion trumpet-the very spirit of the whole mob.* . . . Like Richard Third, he would go from tent to tent-every woman-every man-every child-he would look them over-examine them-for this, that--every detail. He would say: 'You need this. Get that. This is the way to do it.' He went into every action and gave exuberant suggestions-all helpful-building the great ensemble. He spent more vitality in five minutes than most men do in a year. - After it, he would sit down quietly and talk it all over philosophically—analyse every part, and build it all up creatively. . . . Then that guillotine dream in the first act—that was the finest thing of the kind I ever saw—su-perb!" †

This account voices the first-hand impression of a veteran director of extraordinary experience for over half a century. Another contemporary account of these Paul Kauvar rehearsals, written by one of the mob at the time, gives this further impression, from the viewpoint of an apprentice:

"Men and women were standing about watching the movements of the mechanics, except one tall, handsome man, full of animation, with keen. bright eyes. He was here, there, everywhere.—'There, my boy,' he would say in a kindly voice, 'that will do.' . . . He gave his orders quick and fast, like a general. . . . It was Steele MacKaye. . . . Finally, he took a front seat in the orchestra circle. Holding an unlighted cigar, he ordered the rehearsal to begin.

"'You did not put force enough into that,' he would suddenly cry out, perhaps to Mr. Haworth, who played the part of Paul Kauvar. Then things would go well for a time, and Mr. MacKaye would dart up and down the aisles. Suddenly he would cry 'Stop!' Then with a

^{*} Nym Crinkle wrote of this mob (N. Y. Sun, Dec. 25, '87): "Sans Culottes "Nym Crinkle wrote of this mob (N. Y. Sun, Dec. 25, '87): "Sans Culottes now break in. It is a hideous rabble of maniacal men and women, inflamed with passion and liquor and led by Carrac—a notorious and bloodthirsty monster. Human realism cannot much further go than it has gone in this mob." Cf. also statement by John Craig, in Appendix, ii, 147.

† The N. Y. Mail (March 17, '88), wrote: "The author's mastery of plastic art is illustrated in the tableau of the guillotine, than which no more terrible yet fascinating picture has ever been shown in this country."

bound he would leap upon the stage, with cat-like agility, and going up to a man . . . would ask him to try it over, first showing him how he wanted it done. Fifteen minutes might pass . . . and just when everybody was satisfied . . . Mr. MacKaye would jump on the stage, assume some character, and go through nearly the entire act.—In the wonderful way he threw his heart into everything, he fired even the dullest of us.* Very frequently he would compliment one of the mob just as heartily as one of the cast.

"At the dress rehearsal, about three o'clock in the morning . . . when everybody looked tired, Mr. MacKaye, putting his hand on the shoulder of the head scene-shifter, said, 'Are you with me, old man, till five?' Then everybody gladly consented to stay till dawn. . . . On that opening night, one of the first to arrive was Mr. MacKaye, attired in a dress suit and looking anything like a man who had been up three nights and days. . . . Soon he had every one aglow with enthusiasm and, when the curtain rang up, I believe every one felt Anarchy would be a success.-Had it met with failure, every one would have taken it as much to heart as the author. . . . At the end of the play, as the mob ran off the stage, the curtain fell amid thunders of applause. Notwithstanding a wounded heel, I forgot the pain. I could only think of the joy that must have been Steele MacKave's as he then addressed the audience.—Indeed, I would almost gladly have lost my heel, could I have shared the glory of Joseph Haworth and Miss Robe, who now cried with joy."

LACKAYE, FAWCETT; GUILLOTINE VISION; NEW YORK CHRISTMAS EVE OPENING

My own recollections of this play—from its reading aloud in manuscript by my father to our home circle, till the close of its first New York run of 102 nights—are extremely vivid, as I spent most of my time out of school attending rehearsals and performances, in front and behind the scenes, and could have prompted every line of the play, as I knew its every word and piece of stage business by heart.—With my father's grease-paints, I amused myself in making up my own face in particular imitation of the "Villains," Wilton Lackaye and George Fawcett, the former with light line-drawings of the insinuous Marquis; the latter—as demagogue leader of the mob—with features of darkly lowering brutality. Both of these actors have since won distinguished reputations on the stage and in Motion Pictures.

^{*&}quot;Steele MacKaye," wrote the Phila. Times, Jan. 1, '88, "in appearance and energy seems fifteen years younger than his real age. He has the face and vigour of a boy. He seldom sleeps more than four hours out of the twenty-four; the instant he awakes, he springs from his bed. During rehearsals of Anarchy, he did not once close his eyes for ninety-six hours, yet he never seemed tired."

"Your father," George Fawcett writes me from The Lambs, "was an inspiration to me. He noticed me as a tyro—and stimulated me with his friendship. I should feel honoured to show my great respect for his memory."

In Paul Kauvar, Fawcett made his first character hit. I can see him now, grovelling on the earth where Kauvar has just hurled him—pointing (as in Matt Morgan's drawing) at the scornful hero and rasping out, with the terrible power of his huge bass voice:

"I represent the civil power of the State, and that rules the soldiers!"

And how well I recall the last line of the play: "Liberty is wed to Justice, and Anarchy is ended!"

How those final words of Paul Kauvar, deep with the 'celloresonance of Joseph Haworth's voice, stirred my boy heart convulsively on that Christmas eve of the play's opening, at the old Standard Theatre. Throughout that quivering evening, immense cumulative excitement had flashed its forked lightning and fitful thunder through the packed playhouse. Already my father had appeared twice at the footlights, to allay the storm-bursts of approval. The tense development of the drama, from its terrible dream scene of the guillotine (rendered more poignant by the thrumming orchestral dirge of Stillman-Kelley), through the gradual ensnaring of Kauvar, Diane's renunciation of her father for the people's cause (exultant with the youth of Annie Robe, awful with the anger of old Edwin Varrey), the demoniac havoc of the insurging Sans Cullottes, mad with the Marseillais-all had been surcharged with latent fire from the quick-breathing audience. And now the last curtain was signal for a new drama in the auditorium.

"Something," wrote "Junot" in the New York Star, "in these five acts of fierce unrealism captivated the multitude—yes, electrified seven in ten of us. From the moment the audience realised the nameless horror, the immeasurable audacity of the guillotine tableau, the play was that wondrous thing, that incommunicable essence—success. The pulseless horror, breaking into shuddering applause, meant indisputable, clamorous, maniacal triumph."

Never have I witnessed such a reception to a play. The audience roared and rose. Like one enormous being, deep-lunged and myriadarmed, its pent spirit burst with tidal acclamation; orchestra, balcony, gallery—one surge of sound and whirling programmes and

outreached hands! No one turned to leave. The curtain rose, fell, rose—uncounted times. My father stood there among the actors—no chance yet to speak, for still the dinning bravos rang out with the calls of "MacKaye!" At length a lull to silence—a silence stark, with the glitter of thousands of eyes stabbing the gas-lit dimness. Once more he spoke, deeply moved and moving; brief words, but eloquent with the virile ease of which he was master in speech. Then again the tumult, unrestrainable.—In those days New York had few commuters, but probably never before, and perhaps not since, has a New York audience stayed on, continuously cheering for half an hour, after the final act and till after midnight.

"PANDEMONIAC" ENTHUSIASM; "A MOLIERE VERDICT OF TRIUMPH

"On the first night's performance," wrote the New York Dispatch, "the wildly enthusiastic crowd in front made one think that a pandemoniac delirium had usurped the place of reason, and there had really begun a new 'Reign of Terror,' which would trebly discount that in which Danton, Robespierre and Marat were working the guillotine.—

Paul Kauvar is a veritable triumph for Steele MacKaye."

"Mr. MacKaye's play," wrote William Winter, Dec. 25, '87, "shows inventive power, dramatic skill, literary taste and uncommon fervency of humanitarian enthusiasm. It was followed with almost breathless interest, and was received with a perfect tumult of applause. Called before the curtain at the end of the Vision of Anarchy, the author begged the audience to let the performance proceed. That tableau of the guillotine, a dream scene, is magnificent."

The reception of *Paul Kauvar* by the New York press was immensely enthusiastic. With few exceptions, the consensus of first night criticisms were not far from agreeing with Nym Crinkle's reasons for calling it "the best American dramatic work" he had ever seen.

"Despite Christmas eve," wrote Nym Crinkle, "there was a surging assemblage of representative people, with a large delegation of actors, managers and playwrights. The play will never again have a more critically exacting audience than that which passed judgment upon it last night.—Paul Kauvar is a melodrama intricate and ingenious, with an original story, wrought with historical accuracy and consummate dramatic instinct. . . . Any attempt to criticise it must consider that the play is constructed on dramatic lines entirely, and not on literary lines. . . . The great climax of the Third Act was electrical, and Miss Robe was held trembling by the recalls. . . . The curtain fell at 11:30, and the audience lingered for a long while, calling upon the author."

J. Ranken Towse * wrote in the Evening Post (Dec. 27): "The dramatic work of Mr. Steele MacKaye always bears the stamp of a strong and interesting personality, endowed not only with dramatic and theatrical instinct, but with that finer literary and artistic sense which discriminates between what is merely startling to the senses and that which stirs the heart or understanding. . . . In all his plays there has been an intellectual quality, with great vigour and directness of purpose, which has elevated them to a plane far above the ordinary comedy or melodrama of the day; and these characteristics are manifest, to an uncommon degree, in his Paul Kauvar, or Anarchy."

"THE NOBLEST DRAMATIC WORK OF OUR TIME": R. G. INGERSOLL

Concerning the play, several leading men expressed their personal opinions. Max O'Rell, author of John Bull's Other Island and Jonathan and his Continent, wrote for publication:

"Paul Kauvar is the strongest play I have ever seen. nothing on the American, the English, or even the French stage that can be compared to it, unless it be Sardou's Patrie."

Roscoe Conkling-United States Senator and political leader, who still looks in bronze, from his statue, on Madison Square-said of it:

"The thrilling picture of the French Revolution, given to the world by the pen of Thomas Carlyle, has been transcended by the skill of Steele MacKaye in his masterly production of Paul Kauvar."

Robert G. Ingersoll † wrote:

"Paul Kauvar is a superb realisation upon the stage of one of the grandest eras in human history.—This play is the noblest dramatic work of our time."

Besides this statement given to the press, Ingersoll wrote to my father this personal letter, from his home, "400 Fifth Avenue, New York, January 10, '88":

"My dear MacKaye, Paul Kauvar has the anatomy, the vital organs of a great play. It is filled with the spirit of the time in which its scenes are laid. It has in it the breath and flame of the French Revolution. The situations are intensely dramatic and grow naturally from the surroundings. The characters are vividly drawn and the whole

* Cf., in Appendix, statement of Mr. Towse, in 1926.

†"Genius," wrote the Philadelphia Times, "is necessarily impractical.

—After the first performance of Paul Kauvar, Bob Ingersoll went behind the scenes to congratulate MacKaye on his wonderful success. As the great infidel shook hands with the great playwright, the former said: 'MacKaye, the only thing your friends dread now is that some one will wrest this success from you.—'I am watching warily for the man,' said MacKaye. And he has reason to.—After his experience at his Madison Square and Lyceum Theatres, all that this most lovable of men has left is Anarchy and a lawsuit.—The Mallorys have not cared to push that to a trial, and MacKaye till now has not had the needful money to do so." play is rich in incident, filled with action, and crowned with hopes and fears, shadowings and raptures. I never saw a more thrilling scene on

the stage than the dream of Kauvar.

"You have written a superb drama, one that will hold a permanent place upon the stage, and one that I hope will enrich the author. Besides you have given the philosophy of the great upheaval of the volcano that overwhelmed the institutions of a thousand years.—Yours always—R. G."

NEW YEAR'S EVE: A SHADOWY FINGER AND GOLDEN PEALS OF FORTUNE

So, for my father, that wonder-year of success—like a bright pyre burning the dead tinder of old disillusionments—flared in a dazzling wreath of triumph, as it expired.

These auspicious flames of fortune had steadily mounted and accelerated, for more than a twelvemonth, since that eve of Thanksgiving, the year before, when his Drama of Civilisation had burst with freshness and huge surprise on New York, followed by the grandiose success of his Rienzi, at Washington.—That Thanksgiving day, we his boys had deserted turkey and pumpkin pie for a matinée box at "our" resounding Wild West. So now, again, we decamped from Christmas gifts and engorgings, for a first matinée revel amid "our" tumultuous French Revolution. That week of our school holidays was a continuous sharing in our father's triumph at the theatre, till on New Year's Eve, when we gathered as always round the old tall clock of his Hamlet memories, and toasted the oncoming year-to the deep roaring of ferry horns through the midnight, it seemed to us that we were destined conquerors of a walled city of golden security. For us, there, our hero of Anarchy was the wise Odysseus and the heroic Achilles moulded into one.

Nothing then we saw, on the old clock dial, of that Shadowy Finger which, on next New Year's Eve, would point at our little group "far-wandered" and scattered—one, our aged Nestor, laid in his patriarchal earth—others, in a small, snow-bound cottage, waiting white-faced for tidings from a distant bedside, where the brightest of our "Achæans" would lie passing, while our dumb Achilles watched there, himself struck in the heel with a wound for which no balsam is.

But not then, on that last midnight of 'Eighty-Seven—not then—were any such forecastings in the bright "wine-dark" glasses, as we lifted them in the radiant gaze of our author and hero, in libations to his happy star; not then, as the clock ticked the first stroke of twelve, and clanged to our jubilant shouts of "'Anarchy' and 'Eighty-Eight!'—New Triumphs in the New Year!"

SOUVENIR OF THE INITIAL PRODUCTION OF . . .

Steele Mackaye's Masterpiece, "Anarchy,"

AT THE BUFFALO ACADEMY OF MUSIC, WEEK COMMENCING MAY 80, 1887



TABLEAU IN ACT V. OF "ANARCHY"

Reproduction from a souvenir programme of Anarchy, showing Steele MacKaye in the rôle of Paul Kauvar, centre foreground. This picture presents a grouping of the French Revolutionary mob, designed by the author-producer in his stage-directorship (cf. pages 146-148, also page 131). The "tableau"—an arrested moment of the dramatic action—is but one of the many others staged by him in his plays, characteristic of MacKaye's "heroic frescoes," which presented (through harmonious groupings of actors) a vital sequence of "living pictures" in motion, more than a generation before the advent of the modern vitagraph.



PART V

Money Mad

"The great thing is to realise that the life which you must eventually face among your fellow men is a battle, and the victory depends upon certain qualities of heart, mind and will. These qualities are perseverance, patience, self-control...a just and even generous consideration of the rights of others, with a firm will to maintain your own...a detestation of deceit...a delight in the society of the superior.. Remember that every time we serve others they are in our debt, but that every time we ask others to serve us, we put ourselves into their debt; that, as long as the world lasts, the creditor—whether it be in money, or in loving service—will always be superior to the debtor."—Steele Mackaye. (In a letter to his youngest son.—P. 436.)



CHAPTER XXII

SHINE AND SHADOW

"Paul Kauvar," Continued—"A Noble Rogue"

New York—Washington—Chicago

Jan., '88—Sept., '88

PLAY'S LASTING SUCCESS: "MACKAYE DRAMATISES HIS OWN NATURE"



THE "NEW TRIUMPHS" WERE INDEED forthcoming in the new year, and beyond, though they were accompanied by increased buffets of personal fortune. During the rest of the winter and half of the spring of 1888, Paul Kauvar continued its prosperous New York run, culminating in another notable "Presidential" production in Washington. For several years thereafter, the play was performed with great success throughout America, Canada, Australia and England. Next to Hazel Kirke, it was MacKave's most successful play

and, but for its expensive cast and ensemble, might have approached Hazel Kirke's extraordinary record. Like Hazel Kirke it was pirated by "scrub" companies—especially in the Far West.—This impression of its author's personality, by "John Carboy" (in the New York Dispatch, Jan. 8, '88), emphasises the stamp of his individual character upon this special play:

"Give little Joseph Hoffman an air, and that marvellous boy will glorify it with a wondrous improvisation of variations. Give Steele MacKave a mere suggestion, and his quick mentality will evolve from it theoretical variations as brilliant and imposing as the aurora borealis. . . . His mind is a sort of prize ring in which his imagination is dancing, dodging about, constantly putting up its mawleys, coming to the scratch and knocking out all kinds of champion ideas. And what a splendid physical balance he possesses to withstand the strain and vagaries of this ceaseless mental unrest! A very athlete in physique, a bright eye, a well-poised head, and a face upon which decision, obstinacy of purpose and honesty have set their unmistakable seal.

"His play, Paul Kauvar, is characteristic of its author. 'It was

written to thrill not to tickle,' are his own words. MacKaye is a man with an overflow of thrill.—His drama is picturesque: so is MacKaye; it is rapid in action; so is MacKaye; it is intense and earnest—there again you have MacKaye! It has its surprises in situation, so has had the author, many a time and oft; it has its share of inconsistencies—and so has he. In this play, MacKaye has, perhaps unconsciously, dramatised his own nature—mental and physical. So it would not be out of place to announce the play as Paul Kauvar, an Adaptation of the Personality of Steele MacKaye."

HIS "MODERN CARTOONS, HEROIC FRESCOES," "OUTREACH ALL OUR IMPORTERS"

During many months, my father used his production of *Paul Kauvar* to develop the broad, elemental, "cartoon" effects of his visual art.

"As a stage artificer," wrote Nym Crinkle (1888), "I believe it will be conceded, sooner or later, that Steele MacKaye has no equal. His Vision of Anarchy, in his play, brings to the stage tableaux vivants, in spectral aid of the story, a masterly artistic effect that has never been surpassed. . . . The surprise of it is electrical. I have never seen a theatric picture whose subject was so terrible, whose action—as the heroine mounts the scaffold in her grey dress and falls into the horrible arms of the executioner—was so quick a combination of life and illusion. Had it been done by Mr. Henry Irving, this dream scene would have been recognised as an unparagoned triumph of realism. But nothing that Mr. Irving has attempted in this country at all approaches it in artistic ensemble, in pictorial effect, or in mechanical execution.

"Paul Kauvar is a play of action, action, action. In that respect, it is Greek. In the mob scene, tumult comes under the law of beauty and falls into groups. . . . Against the classic bas-relief of Julius Casar—now being performed by Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett—we may contrast the modern cartoons of Steele MacKaye. In some respects, the advantage is with MacKaye. In stage effectiveness, his method is as superior to that of the Casar production as a Gatling gun is to a catapult. Its theatric purpose is to hold the spectators through the senses. You are asked only to look and vibrate.—So with Mr. Henry Irving's productions, colour always has precedence of character, and the lines are arranged to catch the eye before intrinsic purpose is thought of.—But this is the point: Mr. Steele MacKaye has outreached with pictorial art all our importers."

"VISION" AS DRAMATIC STRUCTURE; TABLEAUX VIVANTS IN ACTION; "MOVIES" FORECAST

In his "tableaux in action," here alluded to, MacKaye's theatricpictoral work forecasts some essentials of the "motion" picture of to-day. His "Vision" of the Guillotine, in *Paul Kauvar* is well described by Nym Crinkle as being "in spectral aid to the story." This use heightened it to a truly great intensity; for its dramatic raison d'être was as structurally important as its theatric use was thrillingly effective.

"The execution scene in Paul Kauvar," wrote Col. Henry Watterson in an editorial, "though a dream, is as actual as real life, leaving the audience in a state of shocked bewilderment. The mob is a mobnot a vulgar tumbling of supernumeraries—a tumult, an uproar, such as only the Duke of Saxe Meiningen's players know how to put upon the stage." . . . "MacKaye's mastery of plastic art," wrote the N. Y. Mail, "is illustrated in the tableau of the Guillotine, than which no more terrible, yet fascinating stage picture has ever been shown in this country.

Paul Kauvar is now published in Mr. Montrose Moses' Representative Plays by American Dramatists.* But the reader of that text-following the lines of the hero, who starts from his dream crying, "No, no, my life for hers! My life for hers!"-cannot possibly kindle to those lines as does the spectator, who has been held in harrowing tension by the masterly art of the author as theatre artist. The student of the entire text is referred to this contemporary comment, written before modern plays were published for readers:

"The definite reminiscence of an acted play is its final test: what impression has it left as a whole?-In literary form, Mr. MacKaye's drama would leave an impression which would not correspond to that derived from the acting. The subjective concerns the reader; the objective takes possession of the spectator.—It is easy enough to fall upon improbabilities in Paul Kauvar, but the drama is the triumph of the playwright. Its most skilful invention is a silent picture.—The craft of the playwright and the methods of the author in literature are entirely dissimilar. The distinction is instructively apparent in Mr. MacKave's drama."

HIS VISUAL DESIGNS UNRECORDED; EACH PRODUCTION A LABORATORY

To-day, the visual aspects of the "art of the theatre"—since the genius of Gordon Craig began expressing itself through his journal, The Mask,—are represented in several magazines devoted almost exclusively to such art, and are discussed in thousands of articles. Accompanied by reproduced designs, executed in America by such gifted producing designers as Robert Edmond Jones, Norman Bel Geddes, Lee Simonson, critical interpretations of the

^{*} E. P. Dutton & Co., 1921. † By critic of N. Y. Star, Jan. 2, '88.

works of such men are thus carried direct to the play-going public, as readers of books, journals and magazines.

In the 'Eighteen-Eighties, such conditions were utterly unknown, so that Steele MacKaye never dreamed of committing to publication the fecund designs he was constantly creating for productions of his own plays-designs which, as an artist who had devoted years to the arts of the brush and pencil under some of the greatest artists of his time. MacKave himself might easily thus have recorded for posterity, had there been any means or demand for their published reproduction. Having no other means of expressing his genius in this respect than in the actual productions which he personally directed as author-actor-producer, he constituted each new production a special laboratory for the development of his ideas and experiments—a laboratory enormously costly to him personally, in money and self-imposed excess of labours; for the costs of practically all his experiments and the perfected methods involved were borne by himself. For this reason, a large portion of the sums he earned from many of his productions were often sunk in the productions themselves; for the business investors naturally committed themselves to no such precarious expenses and experiments, since their special object was the one sought, in common, by all theatrical speculators, of that day and this: the goal of commercial profits.—In that respect, this record of Steele MacKave is essentially representative of all creative artists in the theatre, who must necessarily battle, with insight, foresight and patience, for a public good, wherein the public involved are themselves most abysmally unawakened to their own responsibility toward the grotesquely uncivilised economics of our theatre as a social institution.

Another "heroic fresco" ("The Conquest of Evil"), not even referred to in the published text of Paul Kauvar, was designed for this play by my father and introduced some weeks after its New York first night. But though almost equally striking to the eye, it was not as structurally dramatic.—Feeling that the visual impression of the horror of Anarchy should be counterbalanced visually by an equal impression of the beauty of Liberty, he designed and produced a second Vision—(a tableau vivant impersonated by an ensemble of about one hundred supers), revealed at the play's finale. I remember the awe I felt at its grandeur—a noble concept, splendid in design and colour. That experiment alone cost my father weeks of preparation and a large amount of money.

COSTLY PERFECTION: "PLASTIC" PRODUCTIONS: COMPARISON WITH IRVING

In like manner, he never "crystallised" his productions with the opening night, or with the first week's run. Instead, he sought to keep them "plastic," and continued (sometimes for months) to perfect the acting, ensemble, lighting, stage business, etc., uncaring that this artistic perfecting would probably never be critically noticed by the press, nor consciously regarded even by the audience: an urge to perfection which won him, from American business associates, the surname of "De la Mancha." Yet it was the same kind of urge which won for Henry Irving the needful business support for his justly high repute.—On some phases of this subject, my father thus expressed himself in a published interview at Boston (Dec. 10, '88), while acting there in Paul Kauvar the part of Gouroc * on the road:

"It is not often that true art is found linked with ample means. How was my old friend, Henry Irving, able to attain the high position he has held so long? Because, at the outset of his managerial career in London, he was encouraged by a class, who while wealthy, had a genuine appreciation of art, and a disposition to aid materially his high efforts to improve the condition of the English stage. . . . Irving's weekly expenditures reach \$10,000; he rehearses a play six months before its production; he takes about the country with him no less than 70 supers, who are drilled day after day.—Where can be found an American manager able, even if willing, to produce plays with this thoroughness of preparation?—I know I am called visionary, but I would like to try the experiment with no more than \$5,000 a week."

After Paul Kauvar had been running about two months in New York, MacKaye himself (Feb. 20, '88) succeeded Joseph Haworth in the leading rôle.

"Authors," commented a reviewer, "do not often give the best interpretation of their own heroes, but Steele MacKaye's unique personal impressiveness added at once several elements to the play's hero, and to the play, not seen here before. Hitherto we have known Paul Kauvar only as a lover. But the drama calls for a hero of the people, who can match the noblesse with honour and excel them in bravery. Mr. MacKaye made this clear for the first time, and so lifted the impersonation to a higher plane.—The actor-dramatist proves an effective interpreter of his own meaning." . . . "Popular approval," wrote another, "and the good opinion of the critics, has justified abundantly Mr. MacKaye's

*"As Gouroc, the treacherous Marquis de Vaux," wrote the Boston Traveller, "Mr. MacKaye's powerful acting earned goodly applause for an extremely disagreeable part."

appearance in the title-rôle of his own play. The virile dignity of his conception as author has resulted in his triumph as actor."

Apropos of this event, there appeared in the World (Feb. 19) a long critique, entitled "MacKaye's 'Paul Kauvar': A New Departure in Play Making":

WALT WHITMAN AND MACKAYE VERSUS "PRIMROSE PRUDERY AND LISPING HAWTHORN BUDS"

"To-morrow night,* for the first time in seven years, Steele MacKaye will be seen as an actor in this city, in the part of Paul Kauvar at the Standard Theatre. Mr. MacKaye is such an emphatic personality that anything he does must attract attention. . . . Walt Whitman just missed being embalmed in the nurseries of good taste by committing the error of having something to say, and then adding the insult of saying it without eight-button gloves.—A certain Indian agent said of Custer's dash into the valley of death, over the barbarians to immortality: 'If he'd gone round and compromised the thing, there'd been money in it.' . . . Like Walt Whitman and Custer, Steele MacKaye in his work has broad lines and bold dash. He has a large vibration, both in literature and in speech—an elemental strength and creative passion, wherein his work is unlike all other work now being done for the stage here.

"If you would see the goal of Mr. Howells' primrose path in dramaturgy, you must go to the Abbé Constantin. If you want a shock of that wave of romanticism that set in with Victor Hugo's Hernani, you must go to Paul Kauvar. It is simply which you prefer. If you gauge literature with your night-key and the Century Magazine, you will have it come without virtue and go without vice, properly drear in its prudery and pomp. If you measure it by great desires, strong hopes, eager longings, vital impulses, you will put up with its ungloved finger-tips on account of its biceps.—For the same reason, you will go to Augustin Daly, because the cut of his Greek Chiton is correct, and you will avoid Paul Kauvar because the throes of a great nation are vulgar. Like Walt Whitman, Steele MacKaye, whatever else he may be, is not a 'lisping hawthorn bud.' . . . The play-writing talent just now is effeminate-receptive, not seminal. Its best work is pinnicky; patient in unessentials and swaddling clothes. Mrs. Daly is like a dowager with fine, handsome daughters, who change their dresses at every recention, but always wear their mother's set smile.—I should like to regard Mr. MacKave as an Alaric, if I were not compelled to regard him as an artist. There is a sinewy purpose to his drama, which substitutes bloodand-iron for sweetness-and-light. His work has a lusty blare that is not of our hour."

^{*}On the same night, Henry Irving, Ellen Terry and the Lyceum Theatre Company opened in New York, a "farewell engagement" at the Star Theatre. Cf. footnote on page ii, 294.

OFFER OF A BENEFIT TO WALT WHITMAN, SENT BY MACKAYE
THROUGH N. LENNON

Apropos of the above allusions to Walt Whitman and Steele Mac-Kaye is a reference by Whitman himself to a friendly incident, apparently prompted by a fellow feeling toward the poet's impecuniosity on the part of the dramatist. In August of that year, '88, Whitman recorded that a certain "Westor" Lennon, an actor, who called upon him at his home in Camden, New Jersey, was sent to him by Steele MacKaye. This brief reference by Whitman is somewhat amplified by Horace Traubel, in his book, With Walt Whitman in Camden.* Nestor Lennon (not "Westor") was an actor of leading parts who, during these years of '88-'90, acted in two plays of my father (Paul Kauvar and A Noble Rogue), understudying his rôles and serving, part of the time, as his secretary and assistant about the theatre.-According to Traubel, on the occasion of this call upon the aged poet, Lennon reported himself as "delegated," to offer a theatrical benefit to Whitman, who during the interview, to express his thanks, wrote out his autograph "for Steele MacKave," and gave it to Lennon to take to my father .-Traubel thus writes in his diary:

"W. monologued a bit: 'I have a weakness for actors—they seem to have a weakness for me—that makes our meetings rather like family affairs.' . . . Lennon cleared his throat, hitched his trousers and blurted out to W., as if it was a hard job to get his message delivered right: 'Mr. Whitman, do you need money? I've been delegated to ask you whether you need money.'"

When the poet understood that Lennon was a delegation of one, sent to offer him a theatrical benefit, Traubel's record reports:

"W. was visibly touched, and said with a voice, shaken with emotion: God bless you—God bless you for that! I have enough money, more than enough, for all my earthly wants, so I need not acquiesce in your beautiful plans. But you make me happy nevertheless. I shall feed on your goodwill for many a day to come."

ORPHAN'S BENEFIT; OPERA HOUSE DEBATE; "ACTOR-PREACHERS"

During the first New York run of Paul Kauvar came these notes to my father:

"My dear Steele MacKaye—I have to thank you for your kind offer of your company, for the 'Orphan's Benefit.' Could your people possibly give me a short act, to begin say a quarter to eight? We could have you back in carriages by 8:15, to begin your own performances.—Won't

^{*} D. Appleton & Co., N. Y., page 144.

you try what can be done, and let me know by this evening? Sincerely,

Augustin Daly."

From the Madison Square Theatre came the following: "Dear Mr. MacKaye: The festival performance in honor of Mr. Lester Wallack, in the preparation for which we have been a long time engaged, will be given at the Metropolitan Opera House on the evening of Monday, May 21st, 1888, next. We desire to form a committee to aid us in making this occasion worthy not only of Mr. Wallack but of the city in which he has so long and so faithfully labored.

You have been selected as a member of that committee, and we shall be glad to receive your consent to serve. We are—Yours very truly,

A. M. Palmer, Augustin Daly."

From "Daly's Theatre, Feb. 20, 1888," came this note: "My dear MacKaye: Will you be in or near New York May 23 or a few days before, and will you take part in a cast for *Hamlet* (which Mr. Palmer and myself are getting up) for Mr. Wallack's benefit, of which you have doubtless heard?—Sincerely yours, Augustin Daly."

"Dear Mr. MacKaye," wrote F. Edwin Elwell, the sculptor, "Daniel Chester French and I enjoyed every moment of your great play and came away feeling that you are a very strong man."

The President of the Nineteenth Century Club, Courtlandt Palmer, wrote: "I am most happy to have your acceptance of my invitation to the debate. Mr. Brander Matthews will send you his synopsis within a day or two."

Concerning this "debate" the Sun commented: "The speakers of the Nineteenth Century Club, on Jan. 19th at the Metropolitan Opera House, will be Steele MacKaye, Brander Matthews, J. M. Hill, and Edward A. Dithmar. The Dramatic Outlook in America will be reviewed without gloves."

"Among the liberal churches," wrote the Sun (Jan. 10, '88), "like those of Heber Newton and Robert Collyer, a remarkably novel movement is on foot, to replace the regular pulpit orators with actors as 'vacation' preachers.*—Steele MacKaye, Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett and Richard Mansfield are discussed as four of the six speakers."

RANKIN'S MACBETH; HARRY MINER'S TALLY-HO; BLIZZARD ADVENTURES

The masterly staging of *Paul Kauvar* brought my father requests also for his further services as a producing artist. In a letter of this time to my mother, he wrote:

"Rankin wants me to stage Macbeth magnificently at Niblo's. I went with him to look at the scenic models and then to discuss business con-

*This "novel movement" arose from a suggestion of my brother, Will, to Rev. Heber Newton. Cf. page ii, 201.

NEW NATIONAL THEATRE WASHINGTON, D. C.--W. H. RAPLEY, MANAGER. SATURDAY EVENING. MAY 5th, 1888. Grand Production for the Benefit of he: Statue Pashington.* TO BE PRESENTED BY The United States to the Republic of France. THE LATEST AND GREATEST NEW YORK SUCCESS. STEELE MACKAYE THIS PERFORMANCE IS GIVEN UNDER THE AUSPICES OF The President and Mrs. Cleveland, THE FOLLOWING DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE OF LADIES: MRS. NATHAN APPLETON, MISS FLORENCE BAYARD, MRS. SECRETARY FAIRCHILD, MRS. DON M. DICKINSON, MRS. SENATOR SHERMAN, MRS. SENATOR SHERMAN, MRS. SENATOR SHERMAN, MRS. SENATOR L.P. JONES, MRS. SENATOR PAIMER, MRS. SECRETARY ENDICOTE, MRS. (CSTICL TIFLE), MRS. (CSTICL TIFLE), MRS. SENATOR STANFORD, MRS. SENATOR WAS THAT., MRS. SENATOR WAS THAT., MRS. 8. W. WHITE, MKS, SENATOR HEARST, MRS, SENATOR MANDERSON, MRS. F. M. D. SWEAT, AND MRS. WASHINGTON MCLEAN: And the Following Executive Committee of Ladies and Gentlemen: MRS. SENATOR JOHN J. JONES. MRS. SENATOR THOMAS W. PALMER, MRS. SENATOR THOMAS W. PALMER, MRS. HOSKING F. ELVARD, SENATOR W. B. ALLISON, SENATOR J. D. CAMERON, SINATOR JOHN T. MORGAN, REPRESENTATIVE J. J. HEMPHILL, MARGO GOL THOMAS P. O. RETRESENT VITVE II. II TO MR. M. P. HANDY. MR. M. P. HANDY. MR. F. A. RICH VRIDSON, MR. V. STILSON BU ICHINS, MR. D. R. MCKEF. MR. IVMES R. 10 CVG, MR. W. F. O'BRIEN, AND COL. THOMAS P. OCHILTREE. REPRESENTATIVE H. H. PANGHAM, THIS PRODUCTION IS A TRIBUTE TO THE CAUSE FREELY OFFERED BY MR. HENRY G. MINER. STEELE MAGKAYE. →1 → And the Following Volunteer Cast: →++ . GENTLEMENT: STEELE MACKAYE FREDERIC DE BELLEVILLE PAUL KAUVAR Honoré Albert Maxime, Due de Beaumont MARQUIS DE VAUX, alias GOUROC, one of the public accusers of the Revolutionary WILTON LACKAYE Tribunal. GENERAL DELAROCHE, Commander of the Royalist Forces in La Vendée NESTOR LENNOR GENERAL KLETERIEK, Commander of the Republican Forces in La Vendée NESTOR LENNOR COLLA HOGGE, on the staff of General Delaroche. LESLIE ALLEN DODOLPHE POTIN, an usher of the Revolutionary Tribunal; afterwards sergeant in the Battalion of the Bonnets Rouges. SIDNEY PREW CARRAC, a typical Anarchiat and a Republican Representative in La Vendée GEO, FAWLET BOURDOTTE, a "Sans Culottes". EDWARD COLEMAN GOUJON, a Corporal in the Battalion of the Bonnets Rouges. EM, HURD LE WASHINGTON Tribunal ... TABOOSE, an officer of Gens d'Armes J. F. Wentworth



PAUL KAUVAR'S DREAM OF THE GUILLOTINE

Act One, of Steele MacKaye's play, Paul Kauvar, or Anarchy. From a photograph (taken in Jan. 1888) of the first New York production, at Standard Theatre: Annie Robe, as Diane (mounting the scafold); George Faweett, as Executioner (top right).—"MacKaye's Vision of Anarchy," wrote Nym Crimkle, "is a masterly artistic effect.
... Nothing that Mr. Irving has attempted in this country at all approaches it."—Of. page ii, 158.



This "Diane Theme" from the music to Paul Kauvar, or Anarchy, composed by Edgar Stillman-Kelley (1887) is from a manuscript copy made by the composer, in 1925, for this memoir. The music accompanied the above Dream of the Guillotine. (cf. p. ii, 171.)

cerning this enterprise with Sanger. From what Charlie Stevenson says, he is more than satisfied with Will in *The Two Orphans*." *

During that busy winter and spring, the perennial teaching of private pupils still continued at our home, 172 Lexington Avenue. From there, after my own public school hours, I would often accompany my father to offices of managers and to rehearsals of plays. At the old People's Theatre in the Bowery, I recall waiting for hours, while he talked business with a little red-faced, blond-haired Irishman, with a rosebud in his buttonhole: Henry C. Miner, theatrical manager. Finally, we climbed up into "Harry's" elaborately upholstered tally-ho, "Harry" himself mounted the driver's seat, cracked his long whip, and soon we were driving briskly up the broad Bowery, behind his dapper steeds.—In March, '88, Miner became, for a time, business manager of Paul Kauvar.†

Perhaps the most exciting event of that season of '88 was the famous blizzard of March 12th which completely stopped all business in New York City for several days, stalling the elevated trains between stations, where the passengers were fed from the upper windows of houses. Many persons died in the storm.

NEARLY DEAD IN A DRIFT; A \$25 CAB-FARE; "KEEP OFF THE GRASS"

That day, returning at noon from School in 23rd Street, to our home between 30th and 31st, weighted down with several pounds of school books, I was overwhelmed by the blinding snowstorm and lay numb in a great drift. I can see now the solid-frozen beard and crystalled eyebrows of the snow-capped man who saved me from probable death there—a horse-car conductor who was trudging homeward from his deserted car downtown. Lifting me on his shoulder, he carried me to our front door, where the scared servant girl, seeing my frozen hands, hurried me to the hot-water tap in the kitchen, where just in time my "Aunt Sadie" intervened and prevented the loss of my hands by rubbing them with snow in our back yard.—That adventure was recorded in my very first New York newspaper notice, in the New York Tribune (Wed., March

^{*} Cf. statement of Kate Claxton (Mrs. Stevenson) on pages ii, 202-203.
† On May 18, '88, Miner wrote to MacKaye at Hooley's Theatre, Chicago, where he was then acting Paul Kauvar: "I have just written a letter to Al Hayman to 'Frisco, asking him by whose authority they were playing Paul Kauvar at Morosco's in 'Frisco, at 10 and 20 cents admission.—Frank Sanger has written me that the Kendalls want Paul Kauvar in England for the Haymarket. I have communicated with them by to-day's steamer, and you can bet no grass will grow under our feet in pushing Paul Kauvar." Cf. footnotes on pages ii, 162, 188, 237, 294.

14, '88), under the headline, "A Boy Overhead in a Drift," as follows:

"A son of Steele MacKaye, Percy, while coming home from school Monday afternoon, got into a deep drift at the corner of Twenty-sixth St. and Lexington Ave. He was hampered by his school books and in trying to save them he got in deeper and soon became exhausted. A car-driver walking uptown saw his hat above the snow and after some trouble got him out safely and started him home. His hands were slightly frozen."

That first night of the blizzard, my father paid a hackman twenty-five dollars to drive him to the Standard Theatre, six blocks away, west. Almost the only other man behind the scenes was his devoted "dresser," Bob, a quaint fellow who had been the dresser of John McCullough. Of course, there was no audience. Returning home early with my brother, Will, who had joined him, on arrival the hackman in a ruffianly tone demanded twice the sum agreed on, was refused it, but followed tipsily to the front steps and had just laid his hand offensively on my father, when he was sent spinning into a snowdrift by a quick blow from the shoulder of our deft young athlete, my brother. When they were indoors, my father said, with a laugh: "You did that rather neatly, Will." But Will had already reopened the door and was peering out into the storm to see whether the driver had got back safely to his cab. When his glance assured him of that, he said simply:--"I'm afraid the poor devil was drunk." My father afterward boasted of that utter lack of boastfulness in his strong, dreamy son.

A few days after the great blizzard,* I recall the dazzling sunshine on Madison Square, mantled four or five feet deep in snow, mirthfully dotted with sign-posts, warning passers in the deep-tunnelled paths to "Keep off the Grass!" "Take Some Home to the Children!" etc.

100TH NIGHT OVATION; DEATH OF COL. MACKAYE: SIR WM. CAIRN'S COUNSEL

Paul Kauvar closed its New York run on March 31, '88. Two nights before, on its one hundredth consecutive performance, its author, still acting the chief rôle, was given another tumultuous ovation, almost rivalling that of the first night. This was his last undiluted triumph of high fortune and closed a period in his life;

^{*} Taken ill from this blizzard, MacKaye did not act on March 14 and 15, his rôle of Paul Kauvar being played, on those two nights, by Wilton Lackaye. With the beginning of this Paul Kauvar engagement, Wilton Lackaye had altered his name from Lacky to Lackaye.

for about a week later he received a cablegram from Paris, announcing the sudden death there (on April 6, '88) of his father, Col. MacKaye, in his eighty-third year. This death, with the almost immediate sequence of two others of his kindred, permanently altered the current of his fortunes. As affecting this memoir, throughout which my father's father has been a sturdy presence in the background from the first chapter, the passing of the old Colonel involved an unfortunate loss to biography and to phases of American history.

I have mentioned before that Col. James MacKave—as pioneer organiser and president of several great American express and telegraph companies, as art patron to leading American painters and sculptors, as Abolitionist leader and New York chairman of the "Underground Railway," as secret Commissioner of Lincoln for obtaining data used in preparing the Emancipation Proclamation, as a founder of the Union League Club and a patron of the National Academy of Design-was the intimate friend and associate of most of the leading American business men, artists and statesmen during more than half a century. In his possession were quantities of letters and documents pertaining to the lives of Andrew Jackson, Clay, Webster, Lincoln, George Inness, Quincy Ward, Cullen Bryant, the Henry James family, Commodore Vanderbilt, Pierpont Morgan, etc.—These documents, during the last four or five years of his life,* he had been utilising in writing his autobiography in a form comprising a review of United States history during the years in which he had been an actor in its events: a large work, in two volumes, one of which was already complete at the time of his death. Concerning this work, his old friend, Sir William Cairns,-with whom he shared a zestful ardour for philosophy and history, and to whom he had read parts of his uncompleted manuscript,-wrote to him, in a letter from Dover, England, Jan. 27, '88:

"My dear Colonel—This is to 'greet you well.' . . . I have been studying aphorisms of late: some of them bright as beacons. The best, I think, is one of Morley's, headed 'that great business of ours: learning how to be, to do, to do without, and to depart.' Here is one of Pascal's: 'Most of the mischief in the world would never happen, if men would only be content to sit still in their parlours.' Again . . . Goethe: 'In stillness talent forms itself, but character in the great current of the world.'—Vauvenarques: 'To do great things, a man must

^{* &}quot;On his last visit to us in Rochester, in 1887," writes my cousin, Kenneth Y. Alling, "Col. MacKaye was anxious to return to Paris, so he could finish his work on the book he was writing."

live as if he had never to die.'... Now, my dear friend, I found upon this last the suggestion that you ought to publish your first volume, and take time for the rest... Warmly and sincerely yours, Wm. Cairns."

On the envelope of this letter the methodical Colonel wrote: "Sir Wm. Cairns, Jany. 27, '88. Ans'd: March 7th." A month later Colonel MacKaye himself was dead, having caught a severe cold from a long walk about Paris in inclement weather.

LOSS OF THE COLONEL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND FORTUNE

After the Colonel's death, the manuscript of his half-finished autobiography was ready for packing, to be carried to America, on the same steamship which bore his body; but in the confusion of departure, it was left behind, though with instructions that it be sent by the next steamship. It was, however, never sent; and the manuscript, together with the trunks of historical letters and documents, has been lost, apparently beyond recovery. Had it been preserved, the material of the present memoir would have been greatly enriched thereby.—From an obituary of Steele MacKaye's father, in The Paris Register,* this is an excerpt:

"Endowed with rare mental qualities, with cultivated tastes, and possessed of an ample fortune, Colonel MacKaye has spent the last twenty years almost wholly among his books. Those of a small circle of friends, who knew him intimately-his wealth of information on all the great questions of the day, his special and extensive studies in anthropology and the history of religion, his keen interest in the most recent phases of scientific agnosticism, but also his firm belief in the infinite love of God and his unshakable faith in Christ—the powerful originality with which he gave utterance to his own thoughts, or even reutterance to the thoughts of others-will alone fully know how much our colony-how much humanity-has lost in his death. . . . As a writer, his style was remarkably clear and forcible, and although he published little during his life, he has left a large quantity of manuscripts, including his large and very valuable correspondence with American statesmen of distinction since the time of Jackson, a portion of which he was revising, at the time of his death, for posthumous publication. . . . His last words were so eminently characteristic that we give them here. When asked about an hour before he expired, if he would like to have Pastor B- called, he replied: 'Yes, if you wish to see him; but not for me-I know it all.' . . . Born of a Scotch Burgher family, as was Thomas Carlyle, he inherited the 'religious consciousness' of his ancestors. If he differed from them, it was

^{*}Written by the editor, the Colonel's friend of many years, Edward Crane, of Paris.

because he was greater than most of them, and felt that the words of Christ were better worth considering than the words of the Catechism."

A few days after the cablegram announcing my grandfather's death, I called with my mother on my Uncle William (Henry) MacKaye, my father's half-brother, who attended to the Colonel's business affairs in America. It is my only memory of him-a man of stocky middle-height, with smooth black hair, turning grey, fine, regular features, and kindly acute eyes. He said to my mother: "I never made a will before to-day, but to-day I made one. I have left everything to Maggie."-"Maggie" was his wife. They had no children. He accompanied us to the door, genial and well, saying good night.—The next morning, he was dead of a stroke. In less than a month later, his wife was also dead, from no other illness than her extreme grief .- By his will, Colonel MacKaye had left a very large portion of his fortune to this son, William (the only good "business man" in the family), doubtless with the expectation that, having no children, he would pass it on to Steele MacKaye and his children, as the Colonel had been in the habit, for many years, of making remittances to my father and his family through my uncle, William.

Thus, within six weeks, Steele MacKaye's father, half-brother and sister-in-law had died and been interred at Woodlawn; and thus practically all of Colonel MacKaye's large fortune had passed from the family * to distant relatives of "Maggie," whom she (who left no will) herself disliked, and whom the Colonel had never heard of.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND ON "MACKAYE'S GENEROUS OFFER"

It was under stress of these sudden and bewildering events that my father was called upon to carry through a strenuous benefit production of his play in Washington, accompanied by gala social festivities, involving high functionaries of the Capitol and White House. To this production he had been committed before the news of his father's death, and could not recede from it, without causing a complication of embarrassments to others associated with the international raison d'être of the benefit. So with his wonted "Rembrandt luck" of shine and shadow, once more sackcloth, if not "cheesecloth," was exchanged for "ermine," in another notable public triumph, the enjoyment of which was keenly mitigated by

^{*} Except the legacies to his daughter, Emily von Hesse.

private sorrows behind the scenes. The occasion was announced thus, in a dispatch to the New York World:

"Washington, April 15, 1888—Steele MacKaye has infused new life into the women's movement for the presentation of a colossal bronze statue of Washington to the French Republic,* in recognition of the gift by the French to America of the statues of Lafayette and of Liberty Enlightening the World. . . . He proposes a series of dramatic entertainments to be given in all of the large cities beginning in Washington. The initial performance will be a grand presentation of 'Paul Kauvar,' for which Mr. MacKaye will bring his company of about two hundred over from New York, and the entire proceeds of which will be given to the fund. The President and Mrs. Cleveland have expressed their cordial sympathy with the movement. Special cars will be run to bring society people from New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, and all of the preparations denote a social event of the first magnitude."

Regarding this event, the following letter was written by the President, April 17, 1888, to the chairman of the committee in charge (Mrs. Nathan Appleton, "Laurel House, Lakewood, N. J."):

"My dear Madam: I have received your letter of the 13th instant, setting forth the purpose of yourself and the distinguished ladies associated with you, to raise funds for the presentation of a statue of George Washington to the French Republic. I need hardly say to

you that this project has my hearty commendation.

"The generous offer of Mr. Steele MacKaye to give representations of his play Paul Kauvar, for the benefit of this cause, will give an opportunity for those who desire to aid your undertaking to combine pleasure with patriotic duty. Mrs. Cleveland will, with much pleasure, attend with me the representation to be given in this city, and we both desire to express the utmost interest in the success of the plan which you and your associates have in charge.—The plan in view is but a fitting return for the friendliness heretofore manifested toward us by the French people; and it seems to me this effort of the Ladies of America should be seconded by every patriotic citizen.—Yours sincerely, Grover Cleveland."

Further details of the occasion were announced in this dispatch to the New York Herald (April 27):

WASHINGTON STATUE BENEFIT: SENATOR JONES' DINNER TO MACKAYE

"The leading society event of the season will occur May 5th, at the National Theatre, when Mr. Steele MacKaye will give his Paul Kauvar, in aid of the Washington Statue Fund, acting himself the part of Paul Kauvar for this occasion. . . . The Willard, Chamberlin's and the

^{*} The execution of this colossal equestrian statue of Washington was begun, in the early 'Nineties, by the American sculptors, Daniel Chester French and Edward C. Potter. After its completion by them, it was presented to France, in 1900, and now stands in the Place d'Jena, Avenue President Wilson.

Harris hotels will entertain the Kauvar company free of cost. The company of 80 people will come on by special train, with all the scenery and effects. The President and Mrs. Cleveland have engaged a box. Other boxes and the orchestra will be filled by Senators and their families, the Justices of the Supreme Court and other government officials.* . . . Senator Jones gave an elaborate dinner to Mr. Steele MacKaye this evening at Chamberlin's. Among the 30 guests were Senators Palmer, Morgan, Blackburn, Butler, Cameron, Hiscock, Cullom, Justices Field and Matthews, Frank Richardson, Mr. Larry Jerome, Mr. Handy, Col. Thomas P. Ochiltree, D. R. McKee and George Hazelton.† The speeches were unusually brilliant."

"ALL THE UNCROWNED HEADS OF THE CAPITAL"-"INTENSE ENTHUSIASM" The distinguished auspices of this Washington Statue Benefit are suggested by this published report of the occasion:

"That born child of genius, Steele MacKaye, made a decided hit in the presence of all the uncrowned heads of the Capital City. It was the most brilliant and notable assemblage that has been seen in Washington for many years; and culture and distinction bestowed rapturous applause. . . . The mob exhibited splendid acting. Instead of the mechanical hooting and gestures of awkward, untrained supernumeraries, it was as if demons in human form raged frantically before you. . . . The entire audience were in evening dress. In the boxes were President and Mrs. Cleveland with Miss Rose Cleveland and Miss Katharine Willard; the Chinese Minister and wife; Mrs. Nathan Appleton of Boston and Miss Emma Thursby; Senator and Mrs. Sherman; Senator and Mrs. Jones of Nevada; Senator and Mrs. Hearst of California. Among those present were: Secretary Bayard and daughters, Mr. and Mrs. John Hay, Postmaster General and Mrs. Dickinson, Justice and Mrs. Field, Justice and the Misses Matthews, Senator and Miss Evarts, Señor and Madame Gans, Mr. William Walter Phelps and Miss Phelps, Mr. Peixotto, Miss Belle Green, Senator and Mrs. Stockbridge, Librarian and Mrs. Spofford, Miss Folger, Count Sala, Mayoreni Bey, Senator and Mrs. Sabin, Miss Biddle, Miss Aldis, Mrs. John Glover, Miss Aldrich, Senator Allison, Mrs. Senator Stanford, Mr. Robert C. Winthrop, the venerable ex-speaker of the House; Speaker and Mrs. Carlysle, Baron and Baroness Fava, Baron Zedtwitz, the Turkish Minister, the French Minister, Sir Lionel West and the

^{*} A portion of the festival programme, printed on yellow silk, is reproduced as an illustration in this chapter. Thirty-two years later, one of many strange duplications in the careers of my father and myself as dramatists took place in Washington, where a performance of my play George Washington, given for the benefit of the George Washington Memorial in Washington, arranged by a Women's committee of Washington through conference with me, was given, on Washington's Birthday, 1920, at the Belasco Theatre, acted with rare distinction by Walter Hampden in the title-rôle, under auspices of President and Mrs. Wilson, the occasion being attended by Mrs. Wilson, members of the Supreme Court, Congress and the Cabinet.

† Author (25 years later) of The Yellow Jacket. Cf. Hazelton's words on page i, 455, and ii, 344-345.

Mexican Minister. . . . The parquet was filled at \$5.00 a head.

\$1.500 was netted for the fund.

"Mr. MacKaye states that, in every city where Paul Kauvar will be produced on the road, one night will be devoted to the Washington Statue Fund. This means the generous loss of many thousands of dollars to a worthy end—the lasting remembrance of George Washington in the Capital of France."

I have no record whether this highly quixotical funding plan was actually carried out. If it were, it must (as in other cases of MacKaye's impulsive generosity) have been borne at the expense of my father's own pocket, not that of his business associate, "Harry" Miner; for I doubt not that Miner was more devotedly interested in the capital of "Harry" than in the Capital of France.

"INDUBITABLY IN FRONT RANK OF MODERN DRAMATISTS"

Emphasis on some wider significances of this Washington benefit were noted by Col. Henry Watterson in this editorial, headed "An International Episode," which "Marse Henry," of Louisville, wrote in his Courier-Journal (May 11, '88):

"The performance in the National Capital of Mr. Steele MacKaye's play assumed a significance quite beyond the occasion of a brilliant audience and the perfect rendering of a dramatic masterpiece; for the proceeds went toward the statue of Washington, which the people of the United States are to present to France, and one night's portion of each succeeding week's receipts is to go to this purpose. . . . There are many reasons why Mr. MacKave should love France, and wish to link his name with this memorial of affection between the two countries. Assuredly, in 'Paul Kauvar,' he has caught—as no other playwright, native or foreign, has caught—the genius and the actuality of the Reign of Terror. He has literally put the French Revolution upon the stage. . . . In a word, nothing on the English, French, or German boards surpasses this-not even Sardou's Patrie-whilst no production of any American writer can be compared with it in largeness of conception, excellence of execution, and elevation of thought, word and effect. It places Mr. MacKaye indubitably in the front rank of modern dramatists."

CHICAGO OPENING: "PLAY IS ONE OF THE GREATEST OF THE AGE"

From Washington, the play was taken on the road, opening (after a week in Cleveland), May 13th, in Chicago, where the unanimous ovation from public and press was of a like character. Comments like the following filled the reviewer's columns:

"Steele MacKaye has provided one of the strongest dramas from the brain of an American dramatist." . . . "Paul Kauvar has received an almost unexampled ovation at Hooley's and justifies the glowing anticipations excited by long weeks of heralding." . . . "It is like a page torn from the annals of France." . . . Parts of it are worthy of Victor Hugo, who might have written it in his younger days." . . . "Chopin's polonaises all breathe this fiery, untamed spirit of patriotism, heroism, and so does the play of Paul Kauvar. Both are harmonies, only the latter is the harmony of the tempest." . . . "Drawn by a master hand, each character stands for a type of the stormy period in dramatic action." . . . "In its entirety, the play is one of the greatest of the age."

In Chicago, Joseph Haworth had resumed his rôle of *Paul Kauvar*, as my father had come there, under his arrangement with Henry Miner, not to act but to superintend the production. While there, he was given a most royal reception by Chicago's leading citizens, among whom he formed some staunch friendships which proved fruitful, four years later, in launching in Chicago his last great enterprise.

"NOT AGAINST SOCIALISM BUT ANARCHY"

An impression of my father's personality, from the viewpoint of these new friends, is glimpsed in the Chicago Times (May 13):

"An athlete, with a head as fine as any poet's, walks with quick strides between the Palmer House and Hooley's Theatre. . . This is Steele MacKaye, playwright, litterateur, linguist, artist—one of the brightest minds of young New York. A thorough man of the world, he has travelled much, yet not enough to disturb an immense patriotism.

"In Paul Kauvar," said Mr. MacKaye, "I have tried to delineate types, rather than to portray historical characters. . . . There is a misconception abroad that my play is a tirade against socialism. This is not the case. I am a sincere admirer of the grand principles of socialism. It is anarchy that the play is aimed at. . . Although my characters are not historical, each one of them is founded upon the character of some actor of the bloody revolution. Historical characters are too cumbersome. . . . I have tried in this play to bring the stage back to its function as an educator. All this is very hard to do, for the dramatist must, in a line, tell what the novelist allows himself a page to do. A play is the quintessence of language. It is description and characterisation boiled down. . . By the way, I think I shall settle down here and finish my other play, A Noble Rogue. After Paul Kauvar, I think we shall put on the Rogue and give it a trial."

A NOBLE ROGUE: BUILDING A STAGE STEAMBOAT: "ROLL IT UP, MY BOY!"

This play, A Noble Rogue, had been begun the summer before at
Block Island. It was based on his earlier play, Through the Dark

(produced in New York, 1879, but was remodelled into practically a new play. In Chicago, he was now busy revising it anew. On May 30th he wrote to my mother in New York:

"I am localising A Noble Roque in Chicago, as we are getting it up for a run. I have entirely rewritten it. You would not recognise Thro' the Dark .- Remember, Hazel Kirke was Cast Adrift, rewritten. Paul Kauvar was The Vagabond, rewritten; and this is Thro' the Dark, rewritten, with a better and more catching title than them all. If it goes six weeks, I have a great property. I have a wonderful sensationscene building. . . . I am rushing prompt-copy for rehearsals."

Some particulars about the building of this "sensation-scene," have been given to me, thirty-six years later,* by Frank Russell Green, the artist, who writes me the following:

"My old friend, Walter Burridge, scenic artist, who greatly admired your father, had an amusing story of A Noble Rogue, in which Steele MacKave acted. Burridge did the scenic work under his directions. . . . Your father said: 'Walter, in the Third Act, I want a local steamboat, side-wheeler-(Everybody knows it in Chicago; it's called the 'John A. Dix')-I want it to go through Clark St. bridge at night. † The plot calls for it. I want it full size, with machinery running. whistle blowing, and lights in the cabin.—Do you get me, Walter?'— Burridge replied: 'Mr. MacKaye, do you know the theatre is only 39 feet wide? How are you going to get this steamer to cross the stage? -- Like a flash, your father answered: 'Roll it up, my boy! Roll it up around cylinders!' . . . And roll it up they did, with great success."

DEATHS, DEBTS AND DISILLUSIONMENTS; "STAKING ALL" ON THE ROGUE

During all these strenuously busy days of Steele MacKave in Chicago, a turmoil of financial complications, human disillusionments and worries, following upon the deaths of his father and half-brother, was occurring in New York, where my mother was ill and at her wit's end to cope with them all. A third sudden death-(that of my aunt Maggie) !--increased the problems and anxieties. Concerning these my father wrote to my mother:

"Your letter bearing news of Maggie's death is just at hand. I am inexpressibly sorry at all this resulting misery. If I could have fore-

^{*}Oct. 30, 1924, from the Salmagundi Club, New York.

† This drawbridge scene created a sensation of realism then, and later in the highly successful New York run and road tours of the play, revised again as Money Mad. In San Francisco, at the Alcazar Theatre, opening Dec. 24, '88, a production of A Noble Rogue by the stock company there repeated the Chicago effects on a larger scale. ‡ Cf. page ii, 169.

seen it, I should not have taken advantage of my great opportunity here.—As matters stand, I must go on here . . . for I see no hope of money for us next season, except from A Noble Rogue. Paul is being so badly handled that it will never, under its present management, come to the point of paying a dividend to me. . . . The whole feeling toward me in this city is exceedingly friendly. . . . When I produced Paul, all the 'wise ones' cried out then, as they do now. Nevertheless, that production brought us what money we have had, the past year. Depend upon it, this play will do the same. This is my only hope. I have staked all upon it. . . . I am strained to the last of endurance. I would go mad very easily, if my will were not stronger than my circumstance; for this suffering of mind and body endangers the creative work I have to do.—The pangs of birth from brains are longer drawn out—and quite as severe—as those of births from bodies."

Again he wrote: "I am tortured with anxiety about you. I am so driven I am nearly distracted. . . . The expenses of my trip to Washington, Cleveland and Chicago—in each of which I was forced to meet and entertain a crowd—about swamped me. The Republican Convention here for two weeks raises my \$4 room to \$40 a day. This is appalling. . . . At last I have found cheap quarters on the outskirts of the town."

Again:—"Only a moment to write. We expect to produce Noble Rogue June 27th—perhaps postpone to 30th.—I will not attempt to describe my sentiments of contempt and disgust at the episodes * in New York of the last few weeks. . . . I have stuck to this production as the only hope of deliverance from abject want.—A million dollars would be poor pay for the anguish of these last few weeks. . . . Good must come from such misery as ours, or Providence is a silly lie. . . . Tell dear Will I believe the leading part of A Noble Rogue will make a star rôle for him. I must now run to rehearsal, which we have morning, noon and night, every day in the week.—Love unspeakable to you all!"

ELABORATE PRODUCTION, MACKAYE IN TITLE RÔLE, "VERY WARMLY RECEIVED"

Concerning the new production this announcement appeared in the Chicago press:

"Of Mr. MacKaye's latest drama, A Noble Rogue, this much is known, that the Rogue is a character taken from real life, and while the play has a distinctly ethical and philosophical aim, it deals with types familiar to the common mass, in sensational style. Mr. MacKaye wishes it to stand only upon its merits when compared with similar productions in the realm of melodrama. He emphasises only that it is an unpretentious attempt to impress a lesson of the broadest human

*These episodes had to do with disillusionising traits of human character revealed by legal tangles connected with Col. MacKaye's estate—from which my father himself received nothing.

charity upon the hearts of the people. . . . Mr. Hamlin announces that the Grand Opera House is closed for a week, for stage and scenic rehearsals.—The following Scenario suggests the local setting:

"Act I: Love or Mammon—Exterior of Murray's Mansion on the Lake.— Act II: A Strange Change—(1) Interior of Murray's Mansion. (2) Exterior of 'The Bag' at 'Tiger's Hole.' (3) A Tenement in Morton Lane.—Act III: The Crime—(1) Interior of 'The Bag' at 'Tiger's Hole.' (2) Exterior of Passenger Tunnel, North Side, Looking South. (3) Clark Street Bridge Looking up the River.—Act IV: A Noble Rogue—(1) The Tenement in Morton's Lane. (2) 'The Bag' at 'Tiger's Hole.' (3) Murray's Mansion by the Lake.''

On account of the elaborate construction of the drawbridge, etc., the opening was twice postponed, till the eve of the Fourth of July. On the opening night, a dispatch to the New York Times reported:

"Chicago, July 3rd. Steele MacKaye's new play was very warmly received by an audience that crowded the theatre. A Noble Rogue is full of melodramatic action. Mr. MacKaye as John Murray, Jr., alias Jack Adams, alias Di, the Dodger; a Noble Rogue, plays a man who, stolen by kidnappers when a child, grows up among lawless companions, yet maintains a curious kind of honour through it all. He passes through exciting adventures, including a sensational attempt at murder. In this scene is a great model of the Clark Street drawbridge, which is bound to set the whole town talking. Woven into the plot are a clean love story, and enough ruffians and villains to capture an audience at once."

From Boston, Stuart Robson telegraphed to MacKaye:—"All hail to the honest author of the Noble Rogue!"—It was indeed an "honest author," but one who, despite Poor Richard's adage, seldom found that his honesty was the "best policy" to replenish his purse. Temperamentally he was incapable of driving a bargain in his own interest.

BAD CONTRACTS; "TORTURES OF ANXIETY"; NEW PLAY;
"IF I BREAK NOW---|"

Paul Kauvar and A Noble Rogue (under its later title of Money Mad) were prodigious successes, lasting throughout several years. At the outset, however, their author, during the length of the contracts, was deftly outwitted of their large accrued earnings by a shrewd phrasing in contracts with the purchasing managers. The phrasing promises to the author "a sum equal to one-half of the net profits," "if at any time the said manager shall have received out of the profits of said representations a sum equal to the amount

expended by him in the production of said play."—By that little "if" (embodied also in his earlier Mallory contract), my father was deprived of several large fortunes from the work of his brains; for that "if" depended on managerial statements of figures, which my father was reluctant to ask for; but, even when asked for, the figures would usually seem to show that the "any time" when his half share of profits might be due him still lay in the future. Another clause in these contracts states that "the said MacKaye shall have full charge of the artistic production of said play, and agrees to furnish all of his time and attention necessary to the proper management of said production"—but no compensation whatever to "said MacKaye" for these extremely arduous labours is mentioned in the contracts!

Keeping in mind these traits of his as a business man, and remembering how, at the age of sixteen, he had been given carte blanche by his wealthy father to draw from bank unlimited sums; remembering, too, that now, at the age of forty-six, for the first time, he confronted a crisis wherein not only there was no longer any staunch old Col. MacKaye in the background, but the Colonel's fortune itself had been whisked away into limbo by a sudden sequence of family deaths: the reader may read much between the lines of some letters from my father to my mother in the east.

In the east, the situation takes us back to the summer before and to the cottage, at Shirley, Massachusetts. On that cottagepreviously known as the old "Aunt Betsy Kelsey place"—our "Aunt Sadie" had gazed with a longing eye, but instantly had shut it from her thoughts, as an Utopia of dreams too impossible of possession. Unknown to her, however, my brother, Will-from his first salary earnings in the part of Pierre in The Two Orphans-bought the little cottage, by paying down a first instalment, and gave it as a surprise to "Aunt Sadie" of our "Clan MacKaye." Now in July, '88, at Lexington Avenue, New York, in the crisis following my grandfather's death in April, my mother, ill and half distracted with worry, was waiting upon events, whether to remain or to pack all our belongings, great pictures, furniture, old clock, etc., for removal to the tiny cottage in country New England. In that New York setting my mother received the following letters from my father in Chicago-excerpts which tell their own story:

(15th July):—"I am glad to learn how much relief the \$250 brought to you all. I was determined you should have that, even tho' bills here

had to wait.—I think I have made a decided hit as Jack here. I make the public laugh, cry, or applaud, with almost every line. For a man nearly dead, I am surprised at my own success. . . I enclose a few lines to the precious children, and wish I had time for more, but I am hard at work on a new play. We must create while we can, as illness may end our usefulness at any time. . . . I hope you will get to Shirley soon, where you may have the rest you so much need. I cannot tell you how harrowed I am regarding the future."

(Enclosed in his letter was this note to his youngest son, Benton,

then aged nine.)

"My darling boy, Ben—I am sitting at a window that overlooks Lake Michigan—a lake almost as big as an ocean. It lies before me like a beautiful dream—a light blue glistening in the bright sunlight—gay with all sorts of pleasure-boats * My heart aches that you all are so far away from me. I long to get you here and take you out on the dancing water with the other boys and girls—and papas and mamas, that I see having such fun. . . . Well, perhaps good luck will come! Meantime, a big heart-hug for you and a kiss for precious sister, Hazel, and more love than tongue can tell!—Your Papa, Steele MacKaye."

"Dear Mama. . . . Business very bad—vile weather—all the theatres suffering fearfully. From last-week receipts I sent you \$50, and just managed to pay salaries to my company. . . . I am trying to get a New York opening for the play, and to sell an interest for enough to pay debts here and help us out for the summer. I have to keep up appearances, when I am suffering tortures of anxiety and heart-sickening disappointment. . . . Gamblers—who never do an hour's honest work a year—they grow rich, while others kill themselves with toil and keep poor. . . . No man can live long under the horrible strain that I am enduring—and what on earth you and the precious children are to do, if I break now—! . . . But we must be strong and brave. . . ."

"ILL MANY WEEKS"—"GREAT UNCERTAINTIES"—"AWAITING A SIGN"

(August 13): "I have been ill for many weeks—with nervous prostration. I kept up by sheer force of will, as long as I had to act. When we closed, a week ago last Sat., I collapsed completely. Several times I believed the end had come and I should never see any of you again, but now I think I am gaining strength. . . . A Noble Rogue is an honest success, in spite of the fact that I have lost money. I have been offered 25 per cent of the gross receipts to go to San Francisco and play the leading rôle there at the Alcazar. They are also anxious to produce Dakolar—In Spite of All—and my other plays, that have not been produced in San Francisco, on the same terms.

"In other words, I seem to have an opening in California, as nowhere else, to begin life anew—free of debts, untrammelled by enemies. I am tempted to go. I have sent word that I will go, if they will advance me 500 dollars. I am awaiting their reply. If I hear favourably, I shall have to start at once west. Under any circumstances, give up

^{*} Cf. page ii, 468.

the house in New York. If I fail to go to California, I shall claim my right to travel with Paul Kauvar. In any event, I shall not be in New York.—I am absolutely penniless here and in debt. Thank God I have managed to pay my people, and to get through the season with the

appearance of great success.

"I am weak with the effort to write this much. There is no use regretting. I have done the best strength and light would permit, and now, when both seem going, I try to be hopeful.—I enclose you a note I wrote you two nights ago, when I thought the end had come: Wandering words from a weak hand, but a love whose strength I never fully knew till death seemed certain.* . . . (P. S.) Get all my plays together. Dakolar, In Spite of All, Marriage, Hyde and Seeque, and any others that you may think I can use, by rewriting, and have them ready to send on here at any moment I may telegraph."

(August 15):-"I write again, to let you know I seem to be steadily improving. . . . I hope to dispose of an interest in A Noble Rogueenough to pay my debts here, and get to Shirley before summer is past. . . . Please express me without delay the plans of the theatre I hoped to build in Broadway many years ago, † and which were made for me by Kimball and Wisedell. (They were in my closet.) There is a movement here to build me a theatre which may take shape at any moment, and I want to revise those plans at once. I am in the mid-t of great uncertainties, not able to see yet with any clearness whether I shall be called west, induced to remain here, or return east. A short time must decide.—Meanwhile I wait patiently for the Providential indication that is to determine my future."

A BRIGHT SHAFT FROM COHASSET: CHIQUI—A ROMANTIC COMEDY

The "Providential indication" occurred within that week. Into these dark shadows of overwrought fatigue and uncertainties now fell this shining shaft, shot by wire from a leading American comedian, who, thirteen years earlier, had made one of his earliest hits as Moulinet, in my father's first great success, Rose Michel:

"Cohasset, Mass., August 21, 1888.

"Steele MacKaye, 560 Division Street, Chicago: Delighted to hear it! Come on at once. Rather have a play by you than by any man in America. When shall I expect you?-Answer. Stuart Robson."

What Robson was "delighted to hear" was doubtless (from a letter or wire from Steele MacKaye) that my father had finished a

* This is an excerpt of the "wandering words" he enclosed-pencilled on a This is an excerpt of the "wandering words" he enclosed—pencilled on a scratch-pad: "Dear May—The horror of going is in the knowledge that you are all left unprovided for.—What can I do now but grieve vainly. Oh, if I could only let you see how much stronger than my weak body, and its worthless life, my love for all of you is!—If I never see you again,—God in mercy be with you all. If there is another life that permits it, I shall be always near to you. God, how I love you all!—James.

† This was the "dream theatre" of the Oscar Wilde year, '82. Cf. illustra-

tion, with replica of Wilde letter, in Chapter XV, Volume One.

new play suitable for him—the same, without doubt, mentioned in my father's letter of July 15th, when he wrote to my mother: "I am hard at work on a new play. We must create while we can, as illness may end our usefulness at any time."

Among the biographer's papers is a contract, dated "Cohasset, August 29, 1888," signed by Steele MacKaye and Stuart Robson, for a romantic comedy, entitled Chiqui, with record of an advance payment of \$1500, paid down on the date of signing.—So, in a vale of realistic despair, did releasing Imagination bring to the rescue her romantic dreams of poetic comedy, murmuring at the ear of an artist sorely oppressed: "Courage! We must create while we can!"—And so, out of anguish, was created a work of playful quip and charm, born of his poignant desire for "usefulness" to a bevy of young nestlings, who awaited the sound of their eagle-sire's wings, under the eaves of a little white cottage in the far-off New England uplands.

SHIRLEY COMMON: THE PRINCE'S WELCOME-HOME TO HIS "COTTAGE-CASTLE"

Nor did we youngsters wait in vain by old Shirley Common. Piling into the one-horse "democrat" of a country neighbour, we drove some two miles to the dingy little station of Shirley Village, gluing our eyes to the long, glimmering V of steel rails, apexed in the evening light, and rivetting our ears to listen for the reverberating hum of that Dragon Engine, whose spread black wings of smoke were bearing to us from the waves of Cohasset our Prince of mysterious aliases, of which the latest were A Noble Roque and Chiqui.—And so the Dragon descended and the Prince alighted, attended by a little curtsying dog, and followed by a feudal brakeman overladen with baskets of fruit, and boxes of candy and games and cryptic bundles—and we sprang to the dear long-desired embraces. Then we clambered back in the democrat, while the beaming brakeman was tipped with a five-dollar bill, and boxes and baskets and bundles and dog were bestowed under seats and on laps; and the whip flicked the mare's plump shanks, and we bore away our hero into the hills-like a radiant Dionysus, clustered with boys like ripe grapes.

So, back at Shirley Centre again, under the arching apple-boughs, where our mother and "Aunt Sadie" and dancing small sister were waiting, we welcomed our chieftain clamourously home—home to our first and only all-our-own "estate," the tiny white "Cottage-Castle" of Clan MacKaye.



WILLIAM PAYSON MACKAYE (1868-1889)

Actor, Poet, Artist (Son and pupil of Steele MacKaye), Aged 19, as Pierre in "The Two Orphans." (cf. pp. ii, 140-141; ii, 204, 317; and Index.)

Plate 78. Chap. XXII.



SKETCH-BOOK DRAWINGS BY WILLIAM PAYSON MACKAYE

CHAPTER XXIII

ELEGY

Shirley Common—John McCullough—Will MacKaye

Shirley-On Tour-New York

Sept., '88-Feb., '89

And still at night, the bittern booms to rest,

The secret whip-poor-will complains afar,
And still Wachusett marshals in the west

The sunset and his solitary star.

Here, then, let thoughts be memories; let our pride Be the untainted loveliness, which is Our Shirley's dower on woods and pastures pied; Let our ambition, even as hers, be this:—

Unenvious, to win the envied bays
Of nature's health and honest common sense,
And by the peace of sane, inglorious days,
To earn the unrepute of innocence.*

YANKEE DAY-DREAM: "MUTE INGLORIOUS LINCOLNS" AND "VILLAGE HANCOCKS"

IN EARLIER PAGES, I HAVE REFERRED TO SHIRLEY COMMON AS OUR "Stoke Poges" of peace. More, I believe, than any other lost hamlet in New England, it was (and is) a living survival of old English serenities—a "day-dreaming" landscape of elegy and dim folk remembrance.

Here, by the drowsy tall-pillared town house, the ancient stone "pound" tangled with vines and shrubs still clamped its oaken gate to imprison stray renegades of pig and cattle kind, under officialdom of the yet-extant "hog reeve," appointed at election, when the Yeas and Nays of male citizenry divided in two groups on the voting floor, for head-count by the town selectmen.—Here, too, on early mornings and twilights of young May, bright-coloured May-baskets were hung on white front doors by clandestine neighbours, scampering from pursuit of the cottage inmates.† And here

^{*} From Shirley Common: stanzas by Percy MacKaye, read at the 150th anniversary of the Town of Shirley, Mass., July 30, 1903, in the First Parish Meeting House.

Meeting House.

† In a letter to his little daughter, Hazel, at Shirley, my father wrote (in 1889): "When you hang up your May basket for the brothers, put a few flowers in it for Papa."

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on the Fourth of July (in survival of old England's Guy Fawkes) the pied "Antiques and Horribles" paraded with masks and horns and painted mimicry.—But the mantling ivy of this Stoke Poges was blended with Yankee "ellum" and Indian corn. From the belfry the only "curfew" that tolled was a tranquil call to Sabbath meeting or churchyard burial; and among those who gathered to sermon, or grave, there might be seen no "village Hampden," or Milton; instead, "some mute, inglorious Lincoln" or "village Hancock," the latter—kindred, perhaps, to that "John" of the immortal "Declaration," whose own bold script still inscribes the gift of his "lady" aunt, "Lydia Hancock, to the First Parish at Shirley," in the great Bible on the meetinghouse pulpit.

In 1886, when Steele MacKaye transferred his De la Manchan Castles in Spain to the tiny cottage on "Parker Road," four housedoors north of Shirley Common, there lived—scattered within a radius of half a mile—some twenty townsfolk between eighty and ninety years of age. Of these, there shuffled past our cottage twice daily, to and from store, the erstwhile Boston stage-coach driver, old Charles Chandler, brother of the town historian and minister, Seth, who together with his precursor, Rev. Phineas Whitney, had pastored the Shirley flock for a space of one hundred and ten years.

"THE REV'D" R. W. EMERSON; "GENTILITY WITHOUT ABILITY"

During his ministry, Rev. Seth Chandler, Unitarian, had not infrequently made Sabbath sojourn, twenty miles east, at Concord, to "swap pulpits" with his good friend, the then "Reverend" Ralph Waldo Emerson, who thus took his texts from the Shirley Hancock Bible, and later (as layman) lectured on themes of "Society and Solitude" at the Shirley town house.

Into such social solitude, having escaped momentarily "far from the madding crowd" of Manhattan and Chicago, Steele MacKaye is awakened, on this early September morning, in a diminutive room, hospitable beyond its dimensions to the old furniture and the great paintings that stare on him now, from between small-paned windows, in transplanted astonishment.

"Well, father," exclaims his son, Will, "you see! We migratory birds build our nests under many a changing gable, but the dear lining never changes. That lining is *home*, and this time we've lined our own rafters, not a rent-collecting landlord's."

"Gentility without ability!" twinkles Aunt Sadie, in her white apron, from the narrow hallway. "Pass through, James, and wel-

come home to what Percy, in his family 'Haps,' calls our 'kitchensewingroom - library - sittingroom - diningroom.' Breakfast is served!"

"'I eat the air, promise-crammed,' "replies the dark Prince with a bow. "'You cannot feed capons so,' Aunt Sadie."

"Tain't capers!" retorts the wide-eyed youngster, Benton. "It's pan-cakes. Aunt Sadie cooked 'em. They're gorgeous! Just look what's on 'em."

"Lucent syrops tinct with cinnamon," smiles the Mater.
"-Real Yankee maple-sap. Pray be seated, my lord!"

MACAOIDH AT HOME: NEW ENGLAND FIELDS AND FRIENDS; FRANK LAWTON, "HORATIO"

MacAoidh is at home!—"The Hand with the Dagger" severs the "goregous" flapjacks and "the Seer of Rhinns" discourses prophetically of more gorgeous castle towers—cloud-capt extensions of our "estate," to be builded by the inexhaustible "purse that never returned a coin." Seated in his old Dunstan Kirke chair,* near the tall timepiece of his Hamlet youth in London, he gathers round him his little flock and fills for them intensive moments with mingled memories and anticipations. The story of those brief summer days at home would be in itself an endless idyll. Diagonally across the road from the cottage rose a dim grove of primeval oaks and great maples. Walking with me there, by the roadside, my father said:

"Percy, notice those birds there—all beautiful, and true to their distinctive kinds. Each bird finds his true mate. Robin chooses robin, warbler its special warbler, wood thrush its own wood thrush. So they breed their true types—as your mother and I have been blest in breedings ours. Remember, by and by, our quiet walk along this little wood. . . ." And pausing by some orchard bars to gaze into the "heavenly alchemy" of sundown, my brother Will tipped his head down aslant—losing off his hat from his locks of wavy chestnut—as he said to me: "Just try this: Turn the world upside down and see how fresh and brilliant it is! Change the old ruts on your retina; then watch how earth and sky will reveal the wonder of their unspoiled realities. . . ."

With ever-recurring sunsets such memories return—but not my brother Will or my father. Perhaps their united images, faint

^{*} That same chair, still preserved in the Shirley cottage, is the one photographed in the *Dunstan Kirke* scenes reproduced in Chapter XII, Volume One.

though they are in these written words, may glance graciously upward from this page into the mind of the reader.

Another image, bespeaking Shirley, springs beside them in my own mind—the image of one who, in years since, has become an adopted brother in our clan and a devoted helper (with his daugh-

ter, "Shirley,") in details of this biography.

In our old New England soil, genius takes on a quintessence of colour from surroundings the simplest and most isolated. A Margaret Fuller springs in barberry-brightness from our snow-drifted pastures. An Emerson twines his morning-glory splendour around a grey-lichened bowlder of old Concord. By those who never really knew New England such blooms of the human spirit have been labelled exotic. That label is utterly wrong. Such blooms are deeply indigenous. From their very nature, however, they seldom attain to "publicity." Indeed, the labellers of reputation are seldom right. They too often ignore the richest origins of geniusthe boons of solitude and of rural communion. "How," query the Baconians, "could the supreme works of Shakespeare have been conceived by the son of an unschooled farmer, nurtured in the unsophisticated surroundings of a country village by the Avon?"-"How else could they have been conceived?" is the answering query of Insight.

Shirley Common can boast no native Shakespeare or Emerson. It boasts, however, a nobleman of nature all its own, a native presence

"Sent by some spirit to mortals good Or the unseen Genius of the wood."

That artist-presence has radiated there the high self-culture and the beauty of selfless goodness for over sixty years. During latter days, for his fathering and brothering fellowship, his name and image are adored and remembered by a thousand far-scattered khaki boys of the Great War, who (on leave from overflowing "Camp Devens") once camped in his immaculate kitchen and shared the refined largess of his "antique" home, graced by the ministering devotions of three womanly Destinies—Luseba, his mother, Anna, his wife, and Shirley, his daughter.

During all, however, of the nearly forty years since the year of this chapter, Frank Lawton, born beside Shirley Common, has been the staunch Horatio of that lost "hamlet"—the local Gray of its still unwritten "Elegy," wherein his lithe, tall figure, all in black,



of the MacKaye Cottage. (cf. p. 180 and Plate 82.)



"The Firm Foundation." (cf. p. i, 128.)



FRANK LAWTON
Neighbour and Friend. (cf. pp. 184-185.)



THE OLD REVOLUTIONARY CHURCH by Shirley Common. (cf. p. 144.)

AN OLD NEW ENGLAND BACKGROUND OF MACKAYE'S LIFE
Glimpses of his 'Stoke Poges of Peace," at Shirley Centre, Mass.
(The silhouette was traced, by lamp-light, on a wall, by Percy MacKaye as a boy.)

Chap. XXIII.

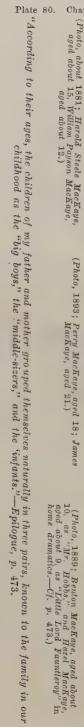
(Photo, about 1881; Harold Steele MacKaye, aged about 15, William Payson MacKaye, aged about 12.) HAL AND WILL



(Photo, 1893; Percy MacKaye, aged 18; James MacKaye, aged 21.) PERCY AND "JAMIE" (OR "JACK")



"BEN" AND HAZEL





save the white stock and tie, under wide hat-brim and black half-cape, may still be met, on his errands of friendship, along those quiet roads, where

"Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn."

Thus, in 1888, Frank Lawton became a benign and lasting influence in the life of Steele MacKaye and his family at Shirley, where, still his neighbour—even as I write these words in the New Year of 1926—I have just received from him this written recollection:

SEPTEMBER "MAY POLE"; "NIP"; APPLE PELTINGS

"While you, dear Percy, are delving apart, in your labour of love, with memories of your father, I want to tell you how his 'rare and radiant' personality crossed my young orbit many years ago.—I like to think of that time of true hero worship. Youth dreams beneath the canopy of the gods; the halo is perennial. You children were constantly talking of that adored father,—vying with one another in tales of the prodigality of his love and devotion.

"Oh, those home-comings from far-away New York—heralded by perhaps a belated telegram, but seeming, however short the interval, endless hours of waiting, so eager were you all to see him! Your splendid mother ("shining" indeed!) spoke his name caressingly. 'Aunt Sadie' multiplied herself to meet a bestowal of welcome befitting royalty. Even 'Nip,' the little black-and-tan, wagged her tail tired, long before the moment. All seemed awaiting 'some far-off divine event.' . . . Through these vivid portrayals I am sure I should have recognised him, had we met by chance in distant lands. The first meeting lingers in memory like the trailing design in rich mosaic:—A young June-like September day; two graceful figures, arm in arm, strolling down beneath the sun-lit maples; a band of children frolicking as though around a May-pole, and little Nip barking a chorus.—Oh, joy! They turn in at our path, and—I am at the door! . . . 'Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard'—are playing yet!—Frank Lawton."

"Little Nip" was the new waif of caninity which my father had picked up on his journeyings, to become a sainted quadruped in our household—since our dog, "Tidy," of Mt. Vernon and Ridge-field days had died, the year before. Of Nip at this time I have an image of a black streak darting around my father's legs, as he dodged about our lawn apple-tree, pelting red Baldwin apples in a fusillade with my nimbly-capering brother, Jamie.

This home sojourn of my father was tantalisingly brief.

have lingered upon it here, because the aspects and influences of his New England home (some thirty miles only from the "Aunt Wellington" haunts of his boyhood in Belmont, Mass.) were among the most determining factors of his career, albeit they have no record in his strenuous public life. Broadway was his centre of destiny, but Shirley was his focus of dreams.

WALLACK'S FUNERAL; JUDGE GILDERSLEEVE; GEORGE C. TYLER RECALLS
"MACKAYE'S BLAZING GENIUS"

From these he was now called away by the responsibilities of his profession. Two plays of his must be prepared for new productions.* Lester Wallack had just died (Sept. 6) in Stamford, causing a crisis in the Lambs Club, of which my father became acting president pro tem.: a situation already recorded in Chapter XVIII.

Back in New York, immersed once more in a maelstrom of activi-

ties, he wrote home to my mother:

"Thank Heaven you dear ones are all together again, and at peace! I shall do my best to get to Shirley next week, but cannot be sure until business takes further shape here. . . . Have just got back from Wallack's funeral (etc.†).—At Woodlawn I also paid a visit to the family plot. The flowers were still quite fresh on Maggie's grave. . . . Gildersleeve and Miner want to organise a star cast for Paul Kauvar. They think they can get Haworth for Paul as 'Philip Herne' is a failure. They want me to play the Duke, and Collier Gouroc; they have Carrie Turner for Diane. This would mean constant travelling—but \$150 per week, with all the peace of mind that implies. What do you think of this scheme?"

Judge Henry A. Gildersleeve ‡ here mentioned, then and for many years after, was a distinguished figure of the New York bar and social life,—the father of Dean Virginia Gildersleeve, of Barnard College. Justice of the Supreme Court of New York, both in physique and character he was an "upright judge," of virile and genially commanding presence. In my father's contract with Miner for Paul Kauvar, Judge Gildersleeve is mentioned as an arbitrator

† Quoted further on page ii, 109, footnote.

^{*} In addition, a "try-out" production in England of a play of his is thus recorded in the N. Y. Times, August 21, 1888: "Steele MacKaye's play, Sir Alan's Wife, produced for the first time at Herne's Bay, England, was well received both by the public and the press."

[‡] In a letter to me, Oct. 28, 1915, Justice Gildersleeve wrote: "I held your father in the highest esteem. I remember him as one of the most talented men it has ever been my privilege to meet. As a stage director, I believe he was without a peer.—It has often occurred to me how proud your father would have been, had he lived, to observe your development and the progress you have made." Cf. photograph of Judge Gildersleeve, in Chapter XX.

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(with Dr. Edward A. Bradley), in case of possible differences between author and manager. Such "differences" appear to have arisen, and the Judge to have been called in to settle them.

"In his contract with Harry Miner," wrote the Louisville Truth, Nov. 1, '88, "Steele MacKaye retained the right to cast the piece for every production. The moment Miner began to engage people for the piece, MacKaye began to turn up and object. When he and Miner had reached the last stage of disagreement, they would rush down to court to consult the judge, who held the balance of power and, with fine judicial wisdom, usually sat down on both of them."

A conference between my father and Judge Gildersleeve is glimpsed in this note from an eminent producing manager, who was then in his apprenticeship,—George C. Tyler, who has written me (1925):

"I remember that one of my early meetings with your father occurred in Delmonico's at 26th and Broadway, where I sat with him and Judge Gildersleeve at breakfast. It was then my regular habit to occupy a Broadway view there, and have eggs, buttered toast and coffee for forty cents, with ten cents' tip to the waiter.—Them was the days! Think of it! Breakfast in the most fashionable restaurant in New York with a show-case location, at forty cents! . . . In that particular conversation, I remember that your father was trying to get Judge Gildersleeve to advance him a pot of money * on Paul Kauvar. The Judge tried to be adamant, but when the breakfast had finished, your father had convinced him, and he made an appointment for him to come to get the check.—Ah me!"

And George Tyler, himself a bold idealist and a well-beloved leader in his profession, has written † this further impression of my father's personality:

"Steele MacKaye—a name that evokes a maze of recollections! I was a youngster when he was at the zenith of his meteoric career, but out of the haze of memory his personality emerges vividly, visualising in some curious way the brooding, burning portraits of Edgar Allan Poe.;

"MacKaye was sui generis, theoretical and practical, imagining new and beautiful things, and transmuting them from idealistic dreams into amazing actualities. His genius presented so many sides that it was impossible to name that which was pre-eminent.—Inventor, dreamer, exemplar of expression, prolific playwright, daring theatrical manager

* Cf. footnote on page ii, 188.

† In a letter to Percy MacKaye, from the New Amsterdam Theatre, New York, Aug. 27, 1925.

York, Aug. 27, 1925. ‡ Cf. pages i, 356; ii, 324; and illustration, with Poe, in Chapter XII, Volume One. and producer, teacher of acting, an actor himself, a brilliant raconteur. an orator noted for eloquence, always beyond everything else he was a pioneer, an innovator. . . . Perhaps it was because of his extraordinary versatility that he bequeathed to posterity no single monument to his greatness; but those that had the rare privilege of knowing him and his works cherish an abiding admiration for his blazing genius, as well as an unforgettable appreciation of his personal magnetism and charm."

The following excerpts from letters of my father, in New York, to my mother, in Shirley, touch on events in the autumn of '88, with his ever-constant concern for his family:

32 DEGREES IN MASONRY; A SHARPENED PENCIL; "A WORLD FAR LESS FETTERED THAN THIS"

(Sept. 18): "I feel very unhappy about both Jack and Percy. I hoped before this that I might be able to send money for their schooling.* I am delighted to hear of Hal's prospects. God grant he may not be working in vain.—Dear Will dined with me yesterday. He is very happily fixed at Mrs. Water's.† I shall see all I can of him while he is here. . . . Am driven with preparations for Paul Kauvar. . . . Hope to see you in Shirley next week .-- Since you left, I have been made a Mason, 1 and am in love with its noble teachings. It is the oldest, broadest and grandest religion I have yet found. It helps and strengthens all that is best in human nature."

(Oct. 28): "I am working hard at rehearsals of Paul Kauvar and to get a proper opening for A Noble Roque in this city, if possible.—I have also taken thirty-two degrees in Masonry within the last sixty days, and am to be admitted, by special dispensation, to 'The Shrine,' Monday night. . . . To describe the pressure of my time and strength would be impossible. I write this only to explain to the dear children why I have not yet replied to their precious letters. It is evident now that I cannot get to Shirley until I arrive in Boston with Paul, Dec. 10th. . . . Miner has gone to Europe to arrange for the production of Paul Kauvar § in the spring, at which time I may be forced to run over and stage it.—Nothing settled vet about A Noble Roque."

† Cf. pages i, 129; ii, 199.

^{*} This money-raised perhaps at that very Delmonico breakfast with Gildersleeve and Tyler-was forthcoming in time to send my brother James and me to school in Groton, Mass. (six miles from Shirley Common), at the old Lawrence Academy, where Miss Harriet Farnsworth (now Mrs. Edward Gulick of the Aloha camps), was our inspiring teacher.

[‡] A year later, this item appeared in the N. Y. Advertiser (Nov. 14, '89): "EDWIN BOOTH REMEMBERED ON HIS BIRTHDAY. The members of Edwin Forrest Lodge of the Actors' Order of Friendship presented Edwin Booth with a handsome jewelled badge of the order last evening, on the fifty-sixth anniversary of his birth. The presentation took place just after the last act of Hamlet, at the Broadway Theatre, and was made by Steele MacKaye, with Louis Aldrich, Frank Sanger, and Daniel Frohman." Cf. picture, Appendix.

§ The first English production of Paul Kauvar was at the Drury Lane
Theatre, London, May 12, 1890. Cf. footnotes on pages 162, 165, 237, 294.

On Nov. 12, '88, Paul Kauvar reopened in New York at the Grand Opera House, my father acting the Marquis de Veaux (Gouroc). A little incident on that evening has been recalled by the well-known actor, Stephen Wright, who has written me (1923):

"I wrote to your father for a part in his famous play, Paul Kauvar. His answer, accidentally delayed in reaching me, asked me to call on him. I rushed over to the Grand Opera House, on 8th Ave. where the opening was that very night. I sent in my card to him. . . . There he stood in the middle of the big dressing-room of that old theatre. Dressed in the Republican costume of the French Revolution, he looked most imposing. He explained that every acting part was filled and the play about to begin.—Then probably catching my keen disappointment, he asked if I would not like to see the performance. Of course I was delighted to. He called for a pencil, keeping all alive with a pleasant flow of conversation.—The pencil came.—With an arm's length sweep, he brought it before his vision, scrutinised the point and, finding it very blunt, passed it back to his dresser, saying whimsically: 'Is that a point to give to a gentleman?' . . . Away scurried the dresser to sharpen the pencil, while again your father made me feel at ease by his own magnetic charm. Back came the pencil and, while still talking to me, your father—by another semi-circular sweep of the arm,—brought the point to a proper focus of his gaze, and nodded to the dresser, with a smile: 'That is much better!' . . . Then he wrote out a pass on my card, and sent me away feeling very much elated and youthfully important.

"I never saw your father except during those few fleeting moments; yet, as in all great souls, some nuance or high-light, some ineffable charm or subtle depth makes him stand before me as vividly as though I had met him yesterday, instead of in that introspective 35 years ago." *

My father wrote again to my mother:

(Nov. 23, '88): "The \$700 I deposited for you was obtained through a fight with Good.† I obtained \$1000 from him and a check from Robson for \$100—making \$1100. Of this I had to take \$400 to pay the creditors of various kinds who are pressing me. I go to Providence next week.—Next Wednesday I deliver in Philadelphia the oration at the unveiling of the monument to John McCullough. I have to travel from Providence and back within 48 hours. . . . If, by some magic, I could conquer space and communicate with you, you would all hear from me every hour of the day, and even every hour of my dreamful nights.—If I could coin the pulsations of my love for you, all you precious ones would be millionaires in less than a month.—I love you all a million times more than this puny pen of mine could ever express, but none of you will ever know how much, until we all meet in a world far less fettered than this. Hoping to hold you all soon in my arms—with a heart hungry—James."

^{*} Cf. Henry Miller's reminiscence, on page i, 408.

[†] Brent Good, of the Lyceum Theatre days. Cf. pages ii, 15, 16.

(Nov. 30, Narragansett House, Providence, R. I.):—"I shall probably be in Boston the middle of next week, as I play Gouroc only in the large cities, and next week the company will be in Jersey City. If I go in advance—to train supers * and see press men—I shall try to run down for a night to Shirley.—I enclose letters to Jack, Hazel, Benton and Aunt Sadie."

JOHN MCCULLOUGH ORATION: FIRST MONUMENT TO AN ACTOR IN AMERICA

"P.S.—I send you a quantity of papers which give a more or less mangled account of my oration at McCullough's grave. It seemed to produce a great effect, but the most touching and impressive part is not reported. . . . Willie Winter has promised to write out and sign the beautiful poem he read at McCullough's monument—as an autograph for our own dear poetic Will.—Write me at the Lambs till Dec. 6th."

"My dear Mackaye," wrote Winter (Dec. 27, '88), "I should be glad to have the correct text of your oration at McCullough's grave, as soon as possible. Conner and I are preparing a record of that occasion,

in book form."

That memorial volume, now very rare, contains the text of my father's oration, together with Winter's poem. In his oration on John McCullough, my father said:

"In the whole history of the profession which this noble sleeper served, there has never occurred an episode freighted with greater encouragement to his co-workers than this to-day. . . . For the first time a monument has been reared over the grave of an American actor. . . . Never before, in this country, has any servant of the theatre received such a testimonial of love outliving death. . . . If we enquire into the causes of this unique occasion, we shall discover much to encourage our faith in this Human Nature of ours, which cynics are so prone to despise. . . . His origin was as lowly as the effort of his life was lofty. Without the advantages of education, wealth, or social position, he won all these through countless trying vicissitudes: won them simply by the iron grit of a dauntless determination, and the unflinching energy of an aspiring mind. . . . He was unfalteringly true—true to his friend, fair to his foe, faithful to the highest aims of his Art.

"While most of those his day saw crowned with laurels . . . the majority of the favoured few of his profession—held themselves haughtily aloof from social contact with the comrades whose co-operation enabled them to win their way—the unsullied manliness this monument commemorates moved through the world untainted by envy, hauteur, or self-conceit. . . . He bore himself with as much deference and courtesy toward the poor and unrecognised, as with unsycophantic dignity toward the high-placed and mighty of the world. He met all the brothers of his guild—with a heart sincere in sympathy, a head quick and willing to

^{*} During part of December, '88, my father was in Boston, drilling supers for the mob of *Paul Kauvar*, and acting therein the part of *Gouroc*, at the Globe Theatre.

advise, a hand strong and ready to assist. . . . This, then, is the final reason for the erection of this monument—because the integrity and tenderness of an unaffected man were blended with the devotion of an unpretentious artist in the noble personality of John McCullough."

AN "ILL WIND" CONTRACT; WILLIAM PAYSON MACKAYE;
21 5TH AVE.—MARK TWAIN

It was but seven years since Steele MacKaye had received a last ovation at his Madison Square Theatre, in the part of *Dunstan Kirke*, when he had stepped out of his play and theatre, on account of the insupportable conditions of his contract there; yet the interval of his battling nights and days seemed more than half a lifetime. During these years, his dearest hopes were centred in the noble nature and genius of his son, William Payson MacKaye, who as a boy of twelve had written him:

"Papa, don't worry about your contract, for it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. It has done you harm, but it has done me great good; for when I grow up—if I do—it has taught me a lesson that I shall never forget." *

"If I do grow up!" That lurking doubt emerges subconsciously from many of Will's writings, and it was strangely immanent in the "ill wind" of that old contract.

On the eighth of December, '88, Will was spending his twentieth birthday in the remote wilds of Texas or Tennessee, on a barnstorming road-trip with Kate Claxton, in a play called The World Against Her. There would have been no necessity for that far southern trip, with its risks of noxious fever in a time of floods, but for the pinch of poverty, and the need for augmenting-out of his own meagre salary—the depleted resources of the little home at Shirley, a haven so primitive that it provided neither well-water, nor furnace, nor any modern convenience against the rigours of bitter New England winter.-None of his family, of course, dreamed of the actual fate that lurked in my brother Will's far journeyings. He himself wrote buoyantly home to my mother, allaying her intuitive fears, shortly before he started south from New York, where he had found a boarding-place, at 21 Fifth Avenue, with that same Mrs. Waters with whom in 1869, as a baby-inarms, he had boarded in East 15th Street, when my father, "cast off with a shilling," was "painting omnibuses," + just before he started for France and met Delsarte.

^{*} Cf. pages i, 427-428.

[†] Cf. page i, 129.

The house at 21 Fifth Avenue,* historic with many old literary associations, was afterward the residence (1904-1908) of Mark Twain, who dictated there to Albert Bigelow Paine some portions of his autobiography in the very room where my brother Will once stayed—and died. From there Will wrote home to Shirley, Sept. 19, '88:

"BLACK WEATHER"; GEORGIA AND "WONDERFUL MUD"; FLOODS; HELL VIA TEXAS

"Dear Mother—The fact of not having a home in New York does not go so hard with me, as the thought of it does with you. Home, you know, does not mean a house with me. When I am away from you and the rest of the family, I am away from home.—But Father is here, and he's a big part of home. I dined with him the day before yesterday, and expect to dine with him again to-day. He's trying very hard to get off to Shirley."

A month later, having started "on the road," he wrote to her:



"On the Road," drawn by Wm. Payson MacKaye.

"I arrived in Richmond this afternoon, and looked for quarters in one of the cheap hotels. . . . Don't you think, dear Mother, that it was, to a great extent, the snowstorm and the black weather that made the aspect of things look so dark to you? Of course, dear, it's hard when sons are just separated from their mothers. It must always be hard. But it had to come at last. I'd give a great deal if I could have you with me to-night. This is Sunday evening and I'm quite alone. . . . Still, I must see you when I get back to New York. Mrs. Waters said to me: 'You must have your mother here, when you come back. Tell her that I'll always have a room ready for her, and she'll be my guest.'

*This house, S. E. corner of 9th St. and 5th Ave., was designed and built by James Renwick, whose son was architect of Grace Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral. At 21 Fifth Ave., Renwick set apart a room for the special use of his intimate friend, Washington Irving. Cf. photograph of the house (still standing, 1927), included as an illustration, in Chapter XXIV.

—I've grown very fond of Mrs. Waters. When I bade her good-bye, she told me I must think of her house as my home. . . . Now, after all, don't things look pretty well for both of your sons who are shifting for themselves? As for the future—sometimes good things come to pass. It was for the sort of lives that we are just beginning, my precious mother, that you brought us into the world, and nursed, and raised us. Oh,—if I could only have a chance to attempt what I feel I'm able to do! I sometimes feel as if I had possibilities in me that might make both of us very happy. . . . When I see you, I shall try to show you my notions of Orlando and Charles Surface.

(Augusta, Georgia, Oct. 25): "I'm really in the South now. In the North I don't think we can appreciate the true value of the word picturesqueness. There is nothing, either in still life or nature, to which



that word applies more than to the negro. . . . Those of the South are unlike anything else created. Look at some of the most monstrous caricatures in Puck or Judge, and you will have some idea of their outward persons. . . . It's a droll sight to see a fat old darky woman, about 150 years old, with a red turban on her head and a corncob pipe in her mouth. More weird are the turkey buzzards, like small vultures, on the roofs of the markets, or sailing the air, or stalking through the streets on the filthy cobblestones. . . . Here nature's kindness is shown in a striking way.

When every other sense is revolted, there is always much to please the eye. Yet what Hawthorne says is exemplified on every hand:—'When a place has become a fit subject for an artist to study, it is no longer a fit place for the dwelling of man!'—I'm very glad to make this trip,



but it's more pleasing when such experiences belong to one's past than to one's present.—There is a great deal of malaria in the South, though I haven't as yet had any sign of it myself.—I sent you \$10.00 from Charleston." . . . (Macon, Georgia: Oct. 26):—"This morning I arrived in this muddy town, after having left the not less muddy town of Augusta, which has been suffering from a flood. The high water mark

(five feet high or more) is still to be seen on the buildings.—The mud here is something very wonderful!" *

(Galveston, Texas, Nov. 14): "Each time I leave a town, I have to jump on the lid of my trunk to close it. I crowd all the books I can



into my bag. The day before yesterday, in Houston, a negro, who was carrying my bag, asked me if I were a bookagent. . . . Now you might like to hear some of the blessings I enjoy.-Good health is the first and greatest of these. Did I tell vou I had gained seven pounds since Philadelphia?—Then there is that

blessing which has inspired warrior, statesman, bard, sculptor and painter-liberty!!!-Again, I'm seeing the country, and there's much justice in the old phrase, 'This is a great country.'-In Eagleton's dressing-room here in Galveston, this inscription was found:

> 'If I had an enemy And wanted to send him to Hell, I'd give him a route through Texas: It would do just as well."

SHIRLEY CHRISTMAS REUNION: WILL'S ZEST AND POETRY: "THE CLEAR CRYSTAL"

Soon after mid-December, he was back in the North, and though his "route through Texas" had already implanted its sinister seed. vet of this he was unaware, and it was a very happy and hallowed Christmas Eve † that he passed in reunion with his family at the Shirley home,—"Am I not the picture of health?" he said to us, as we regathered round the big table by the tall clock in the tiny dining-room. In one of his many note-books he had written: "How quickly an active and sensitive mind can build up a sacred little past!"—Already the new home had become thus "sacred" with enchanting associations.

Extricating himself from his Paul Kauvar production in Boston. my father had sped also to Shirley for this last and only Christmas reunion there. Outdoors the delights of skating lured us to

San Francisco, at the Alcazar Theatre.

^{*}At this same time, he wrote to his friend, May Monroe, in Europe: "The family are in Shirley, Mass., for the winter. Jamie and Percy go to boarding school in Groton—a town close by Shirley. Those two boys are a pretty good sort. Percy, I think, is going to make a hit in something. He's fast becoming a man. Jamie is the handsomest fellow in America, but I don't know yet what his specialty will be."

† On that Christmas Eve, 1888, A Noble Rogue opened a successful run in San Erspaises at the Alexen Theotre.

"Hazen's meadow," flooded and frozen. On the way we passed the old Longley Manse, where continuously since 1786 the household régime of its inmates had flowed on in a current as quaintly serene as the old quiet life of "Cranford."

Here dwelt, with their great-statured and big-hearted brother, Melvin, two gentle "maiden-ladies"—the flower-like product of a rural aristocracy, manor-borne to "plain living and high thinking"—the Misses Longley, Mary and Marrette. No warm reserve more innately lyric with sweet dignities has ever dwelt in antique palaces than shone in the ardent reticence of those sister spirits. Of my brother Will, that Christmas time, they afterward wrote to me:

"We saw him but once. That was as he passed the house with you and several of your brothers, on the way back from skating. We remember how—as we watched you going by—your brother Will threw his arm about one of you in such an affectionate way that it drew us toward him at once most lovingly."





Indoors, at our cottage, there were more zestful pleasures than skating. Among the sofa cushions, climbed over by the two youngest (after bulging stockings had been relieved of the magic of Santa Claus), Will would read aloud, The Ancient Mariner, or The Wandering Jew, whose pictures he would draw (here repro-

duced), or show us Wolf's Wild Animals and the great Doré Don Quixote, pausing to extemporise fresh tales and fables around the wonderful illustrations.—Again he would relate to us his acting adventures on the road, drolly illustrated in his sketch-books by pen and pencil drawings—some of which are included as illustrations in this chapter.—With Will, too, my father would discuss that favourite theme of our family circle—"the universe," its how and why and whither; or he and my brothers would listen delightedly when Will would pull from his pocket and read aloud some piece of lyric nonsense of his own, such as this:

"If there were a land
Where crocodiles bland
On the roof of a woodshed might huddle,
What a capital spree—
What waterproof glee
To sail pirate fleets on a puddle!
"Or if I but knew

"Or if I but knew
Of a gypsy or two

Who was willing to loan me some castles, How much I'd delight,

On a sweet, sandy night, To drag them along by their tassels!

"But in this rough world,
Where the heartaches are hurled

Like the green and blue shades of a bubble, And o'er life's dark main,

Like the coming of rain, Sweep the bodings and frescoes of trouble,

"There's naught for a man,
Who's been true to a plan
Of honesty, pride and good manners,
But storm floods all reeking
With unuttered speaking,
And sometimes—duck, served with bananas!"

Or again Will would read snatches of an epical poem he had begun in Spenserian verse, of which these are some stanzas:

"Where meadow slopes reach far their green expanse,
And barley crops, in waves of russet hue,
Bend to the breeze; where glints the silvered glance
Of sunlight from the poplar groves, and through
The distant haze faint lines of azure blue
Mark the long mountain-range beyond the lake,
There is a vintage, where a busy crew
Of jolly rustics daily toil and make
A liquor to be stored for future stomach-ache.

"When cultured youth was somewhat low of pocket
(I mean about five centuries ago!)
And cultured legs moved stiffly in their socket
For reason of their saunters to and fro
(I write these lines because they're apropos
Of what shall be a theme to shape my song),—
At such a time, I say, a mile or so
From that same vintage, with its busy throng,
A hungry student trod with weary strides and long.

"His figure was uncommon in its height—
A few odd inches more than six-feet-one;
His face was smooth; his hair was long and light;
His eyes were small and squinted at the sun;
His skin was browner than a breakfast bun;
His nose stuck boldly forward like a spike;
His mouth halfway around his face did run;
A greater beauty you might easily strike,
And yet he had a face that honest people like. . . .

"Now straightway down a lane the clod hath gone
But comes anon, returning with the wine
High in a beaten-silver pitcher borne
Bedraped with foldings of a living vine,
Mid which wild roses did all intertwine
And golden honey-bees did hover o'er;
And now into a crystal goblet fine
The clear cascades of ruddy liquid pour:
I think a fairer sight was never seen before.

"The cold, clear crystal, glistening with dew,
The bubbling silver at the glowing brim,
The splendid richness of the purple hue
To which the glory of a gem seemed dim,—
It was a sight whereat the senses swim!
The eager student, with impulsive cry,
Grasped out and clutched. . . ."

The stanzas remain unfinished—like the young poet's life, whose theme was hardly commenced. "Glistening with dew," the "clear crystal" toward which he grasped—with its "bubbling silver at the glowing brim"—was soon to be shattered in sudden darkness.

"PASSAGE OF OUR LIFE-GLIMPSE-RAILWAY TRAIN"

From his brief Shirley Christmasing, Will was called back to New York, to resume his acting tour—my father having shortly preceded him. Just before starting, Will was seized with a chill, and "Aunt Sadie," our consummate nurse, was tempted to keep him at home to find out the cause; but he made light of it, and drove off

on the long winter drive to Ayer Junction. I went with him. It was bleakly cold. At the station he pulled off his blue-and-red toboggan cap, handing it to me, as he donned his city head-gear.

His train was an hour late—a blessed hour's extension to my closing lease of memories. We sat together in the little dingy station, where he talked to me of my school at Groton, of the little children at home (suggesting to me the fun of entering imaginatively into their unfolding lives), and of what we might all do together in the future.-I can hear yet the loud blare and clanging jar of the engine that crashed the quiet there of our last communion, rushing my brother aboard of his outbound train. Till the last moment he stood on the platform of the last car, to talk with me. The car jerked and started; he waved, called "good-bye!" and, while the train pulled out, I saw his nobly graceful figure move alertly inward, cut off from my sight,—to pass still more deeply inward into the very heart of a guiding mystery which, ever since then, has motivated my creative life. . . . So, drawing over my own head and ears his pied toboggan cap, I drove homeward the lonesome, snowy road to Shirley Common. The fading twilight was bitter cold.—The bright cap still hangs in my work-study.

In one of my brother Will's notebooks there is pencilled by him on a page headed, "Passage of our life—glimpse—railway train,"—these words:

"We're all off on a railway journey, and each man rides in his own train,—each looks out of his own window, and sees the landscape fly away from him. . . . Yesterday, I came to a river, with trees and flowers growing along its banks. The water was clear, and the sun shone out of it, and the reflected trees and flowers danced in the sky, and my reflection danced with them. . . . This morning, I came to a bend in the river and passed away from it. I looked back upon it as it sunk away. The trees and flowers were still dancing there, but I was not with them. I looked at each pool in the rock islands, and each tiny harbour where my reflection had dipped and fled away again. In the distance, where it was hazy and the colours along the banks were massed, I fancied that I could see every separate blossom spring out, just as I used to know it. But I knew that I passed continually further from them, and that no longing could bring them back. . . . Then I looked ahead, to find if there were any hope of meeting with the river again. But clouds of black smoke from the engine hid everything before me. For a long while together, I looked straight ahead and saw nothing but the tumult of the shifting blackness.—But once it parted for a space, and I saw things that made me bound with joy.—The next instant, it closed again; but I looked away, for I knew that that floating darkness was no part at all of the landscape ahead."

LAST ACTING, TEXAS FEVER; SHELLEY; SLEIGH BELLS-A TELEGRAM

In New York, Will went again to Mrs. Waters' boarding-house, 21 Fifth Avenue. From there he hurried to Brooklyn, where Kate Claxton and Charles Stevenson were reopening their season with The World Against Her, in which Will acted the uncongenial part of "a dude-like young man," Harold Vernon.—Though increasingly ill, he took the cold long journey to Brooklyn by horse-car and ferry, to act his part. Then, for three or four nights, he rose from bed and reluctantly incurred the expense of a cab, trying to complete the Brooklyn run of the play, till finally, acting with a temperature of 105, he succumbed, and informed the family of his illness, not having wished to worry them before.-The illness was diagnosed as typhoid, then called "Texas fever," incurred during his recent road tour in the far South. My father had rooms at the Alpine Apartments, 33rd St. and Broadway, where my mother joined him from Shirley. At 21 Fifth Avenue, all her waking hours were spent at Will's bedside, where he asked her to read aloud, chiefly from his beloved Shelley and Thackeray's The Newcomes. My father gave up all other occupations, to watch there, beside her. For three weeks their hopes fought against fate, flamed whitely, trembled-then flickered out.

Far away, in Shirley, at the little cottage, I was at home from my Groton school, waiting for news. On January 22nd, I was alone with Aunt Sadie—the younger children at the village school house. Sleigh bells jingled; a knock; a telegram brought in by William Cram, the town mail-carrier.—Aunt Sadie tore it open—handed it, trembling, to me.—Standing together by the old tall clock, we looked out through the little panes of the east window on to the lonely snow-rutted highway. Children's voices sounded faintly—nearer now, shouting gaily,—my small brother, Ben, and sister Hazel, dragging their bright-colored sleds.—School was out!

Still I can see them turning up the path from the road—rosy-cheeked, laughing, stumbling in the deep snow, their red-knitted mufflers flying. The door bursts open—Ben rushes in—looks at us, the torn yellow envelope—stares. . . .

WILL'S DEATH: COMMENTS OF WM. WINTER, NYM CRINKLE, HEBER NEWTON, H. M. ALDEN, GEN. SHERIDAN, KATE CLAXTON

In New York, William Winter wrote in the Tribune (Jan. 23, '89):

"William Payson MacKaye, son of Steele MacKaye, the well-known author and manager, died yesterday in this city, aged twenty. Four

years ago he entered upon his chosen profession, that of the stage, at the Lyceum Theatre, in his father's play, In Spite of All. . . . For the last two years, he has been a member of Kate Claxton's company, and in the part of the cripple, Pierre Frochard, his success was pronounced and immediate. He was also in the cast of Miss Claxton's later production, The World Against Her. During the recent Southern tour of Miss Claxton's company, he contracted malarial fever in Texas. No young man in the profession was more richly endowed with talent, or had a more promising future. . . . The funeral will take place at All Soul's Church, West Fifty-eighth Street, at 11 a. m. to-morrow. The Rev. R. Heber Newton and the Rev. Francis Henry will officiate. The burial will be in the family plot in Woodlawn Cemetery." *

Will's richly vital, exuberant, imaginative nature, gloriously athletic in fancy and physique, is a being so brightly removed from the penumbra of death, that I am loth to associate here anything mortuary with his living record. Yet the sharp stab of anguish at his early taking-off struck so mortal a blow to my father, that the pang of his passing cannot be evaded or blurred over, with truth to this memoir, of which his life and death are such instigating and inseparable elements. I must, therefore, chronicle here at least a few reflexes of this moment of Will's death in the hearts and minds of others who knew him well.—Among those were the two foremost dramatic critics of New York; and it is honourably revealing of both their natures to record here the calibre of those men, eminent rivals in their profession for a generation, as these expressions of their human sympathy give vistas into their deepest motives.—"Nym Crinkle" wrote to my mother:

"My dear Mrs. MacKaye—I do not feel warranted in breaking into your sacred grief with mere words. One thought only must go to you. It is this:—Your ideal boy was really made of imperishable elements. The sweeter compounds of his young life defy the incidents of sorrow with the puissance of perpetuity.—I wish I knew how to say this and make you feel that it is not a sentiment with me, but a living fact of consciousness, pulsing back to me over gulfs of neglect and remorse and carelessness along the invisible channels of an everlasting love. . . . It is the calamity of our tears that they are little lenses that magnify our helplessness, and you are doubtless at this moment saying in your bereaved mother's heart, 'This then is dissolution and death.'

"But I, who afar off saw your boy at times and felt the influence of his strangely gentle and noble character, and discerned through all the

^{*} Further data concerning Will MacKaye and his acting career are given in the Appendix, ref. to p. ii, 471. In a letter to me, my brother Harold referred to Will as "that gentle, refined spirit that loved the wild music of savage verse, and seemed to draw deepest joy from fiercest pictures."

whirling ephemera of the artificial life into which his tenderness and loyalty had gone—the calm superiority of his young nature,—I know that the inestimable qualities that made him Will to you will keep him Will throughout all the vicissitudes of the universe, or else the unity of the atom that passes in the change from water to fire intact has lied to us. . . . The to-morrow will have a whisper—it will be this: that even Death is benign. . . . You have a golden anchor on the other shore.

"I send you no more words.—I feel how despicable they are in this throb that goes to you from a father's soul. Say to Steele for me, when your tears are one—that, looking into these ghastly vacancies, I see the chain cables that unite us to one destiny—they are Home and Mother

and Hope. . . . Yours newly-Andrew C. Wheeler."

To my father came this note (Jan. 29):

"My dear old Friend,—The burial day of your dear child was the anniversary of the death of mine. I wish that I could help you to bear your affliction. But that is impossible. All we can do is to grieve for each other. There is no comfort. We must oppose to such grief the steadfast resolution to endure. I have tried to do it. You must try. We shall both arrive at the end of this ordeal very soon. . . . The dear boy had a happy life. He cannot now be grieved or hurt by any of the troubles of this world.—All that you and your dear wife suffer is known to me. You are both continually in my thoughts. Little did we dream, when last we met, that such a calamity was at hand. . . . It seems like an intrusion to write to a man who is in such trouble as yours, yet it is the prompting of my heart.—God help you! Ever yours—William Winter."

These following notes are likewise revealing of their writers:

(From his editor's chair at Harper's Magazine [Jan. 25, '89], Henry

M. Alden wrote to my father):

"I am grieved beyond measure—heartsick. What loveliness there was in Will that, having seen him but a little, he seemed so near and dear to me.—I gave my heart to him. Who could keep his heart, knowing him? To you and your dear wife—my tenderest love. Always yours—H. M. A."

(The autumn before, Rev.. Heber Newton had written my father from All Soul's Church:)

"I am so glad to have your son, Will, with us. It is a pleasure to look upon his fresh face, so full of youth's best enthusiasms—so radiant with 'the light that never was on land or sea.'"

(Now Dr. Newton wrote again to my father [Jan. 29]):

"I have the privilege of conveying to you the minutes drawn up by our All Soul's Brotherhood, expressing the regard had for dear Will by our young men.—The impress of his presence commended him most strongly to them, especially as representing the career to which he had given himself with such high aspiration and ideals. It was a particular pleasure to have him so represent here the theatre, as an expression of our recognition of its place in society and in the education of man. . . . Let me assure you of my profound sympathy. I was very fond of Will—as everybody must have been who knew him. His bright, handsome face, his fine carriage, the enthusiasm lighting up his eye, the sense of moral aspiration in the opening of a career,—all these won my admiration and affection. It was a peculiar satisfaction to see him so often with us, and to have our church in this way express its sympathy with the profession to which he had given himself in your footsteps."

(To my father, from Boston, William R. Alger wrote):

"No one could appreciate Will's lovely qualities more than I did—his mystic sweetness and gentleness. He was such a rich, aspiring, noble, beautiful nature that he was far better suited for the society of a higher world than for the jostling throng of ours."

(From out west, General Sheridan wrote):

"My dear Steele: Though half a continent stretches between us, the shadow that has fallen on you darkens my way, and my soul cries out in agony with yours. There never swept behind the curtain of the Infinite a braver, sweeter, truer, nobler boy than the one you now hand over.—He was pure in heart, cheerful in industry, unflinching in courage, loyal to his trusts to all. . . . Knowing, as I do, your firm belief that death is but a passing to a grander field of action, I know the shadowing clouds will lift. To you and your dear wife—Ever your friend and comrade, in joy or sorrow,—Geo. A. Sheridan."

(And Kate Claxton-Mrs. Charles A. Stevenson-wrote to my mother,

from Cincinnati, Jan. 24, '89):

"To satisfy my own feelings, I must tell you how much we all honoured and loved your dear boy, and how the news of his death left no dry eye in the entire company, where he has been a companion and friend to us all, for so many months. . . . The little children (Daisy and Ella) are not to be consoled. Will made many a long, tedious railroad journey a delight to them, with his weird fairy tales and poetic fancies—one upon his knee, the other standing open-eyed and 'mouthed beside him: I think I see the trio now! . . . He was a loyal, honourable, gentle, chivalrous gentleman, and the verdict of his intimate companions last night was that—if we really are put here for a time to be chastened and purified for a higher life—Will MacKaye was as well prepared to enter it as any one in this rough world. . . . For myself—I'm afraid you won't be able to read this scrawl, for truly tears are blinding me.—

There is no such word as 'forget.'"

(Twenty-eight years later, unforgetting, she wrote to me, from "the Astor Apartments, New York, Nov. 21, 1916"):

"My dear Percy MacKaye-Perhaps you will not think it an intrusion if I tell you how your dear brother Will lives in my memory as one of the most beautiful characters I have ever known.—Endowed with many talents, possessed of a grace of mind, a charm of personality that might have won him many friends, his own friendship was not lightly given.—He was honourable, conscientious and oh! so unselfish! He was an untiring student. Many times I asked him to study less and walk more, but he'd only smile and tell me 'the goal had to be reached,' and then study on. Such application, allied to so much talent, could have but one ending.—I must believe he was one of the few who achieve greatness. . . . I shall always hold him in tender remembrance.—Mrs. Charles A. Stevenson. P. S.—And I must not forget to say, there never was but one other who gave so good performances of Pierre as he."

"DESOLATION-WORK-FRANTIC WORK: MY HEART IS IN THE HIGHLANDS"

One other indelible remembrance of Will's passing abides with me. After the funeral at Woodlawn, my father had returned with my mother to our Shirley cottage—the lasting memorial of his thoughts of us. There, at a school week-end, I returned from Groton and found them. It is merely a flash of memory, but etched in keen fire.—They had heard my sleigh stop outdoors, but had not come to the door. I flung it open and entered. In a corner of the tiny parlour, drawn back—with one arm around my mother—my father stood waiting with her. For an instant, we looked in each other's eyes—then I rushed into their arms. . . . A few days later, back in New York, he wrote home:

"Precious Mama—and infinitely loved wife: Now that I am here again alone, the desolation Will's death has brought on me seems almost unendurable. Work—frantic work is my only escape from torture; but if that can only bring us all together soon, even such sorrow as ours will not be fruitless. . . . I got a hundred dollars from Judge Gildersleeve to-day, which I deposited for you. I am going to try and finish new version of Clod and Courtier quickly, in hopes of raising something on that soon. . . . On my way home, I watched for Woodlawn—standing on the platform for many an hour. I saw the station, but the night was too dark for me to see more. I could only turn my face toward that sacred spot of earth with unutterable and useless yearning.—May the Mercy of Divine Love help us! There seems no consolation—nothing that can heal the horrible wound our darling's death has given to our lives. . . . Kiss all our dear ones. Hug Aunt Sadie and get her to hold you to her heart for your husband—Steele MacKaye."

(Again a few days later): "I realize our loss more every hour. I see no one except on business. I dive desperately into work—yet my work is worthless.—Perhaps this will end sometime, but that day seems now very far away. If only I can sell Clod and Courtier,* I shall see

^{*} Clod and Courtier was never sold or produced. It remains among the manuscripts of my father's plays.

more of you—and settle our Washington home. . . . When are you going to send me the photos of Will? I have written to Chicago concerning the negatives. When I have a quantity of pictures to show, I am going to see Quincy Ward and find out what he will do a bust—or a medallion—of Will for—for me, as an old fellow-student * of art with him. . . . God bless and keep you all! My heart is in the Highlands of dear Shirley—and Woodlawn."

"A LITTLE THING": NO MORE SMOKING-A CONJURATION

The shock of this crisis to my father's health was severe in itself, and undoubtedly served to shorten his life. It was now augmented by a great strain to which he submitted himself in his son's remembrance.—My earliest mental images of my father are swathed in clouds of cigar smoke. He was now nearly forty-seven. All his life, since boyhood, he had been an inveterate smoker. This had troubled Will, who had advised his smoking less, on his health's account. Recalling that advice, my father now ceased smoking altogether. Henry Dixey, who was with him at the moment, has told me how he suddenly took from his lips a lighted cigar and laid it down.

"Harry," he said, "one little thing at least I can still do for my boy. You see that cigar?—That is the last tobacco I shall ever smoke."

"But, Steele, that's no little thing. You can't do it."

"On the contrary. It's done! I shall never smoke again."

And he never did. But that act of will power and remembrance cost him six months of severe nervous strain and torment.—Three years later, on the anniversary of his son's death, he entered the new offices of his last enterprise, the Spectatorium. There, in dedication, the first words he wrote were these—which he sent to my mother to keep: †

"WILLIAM PAYSON MACKAYE

"My own precious immortal boy! God grant that you may become the guiding influence of your father's life—leading him, through noble works, to a noble spiritual development: one worthy of your own unsullied, aspiring soul.—Dearest treasure of the freer world of our future, may I conjure you to help me to that strong wisdom, which shows the will how to conquer in the life that gifts us with the divinest love!"

That conjuration was not in vain. Two years later, he also had

^{*}This refers to my father's young manhood, when he was a fellow-student with J. Q. A. Ward, under George Inness, in the eary 'Sixties. Cf. Chapter III. † Cf. page ii, 317.

passed to that "freer world of our future"; but beyond all the dark pits of circumstance that beset the interval of his life, "the will to conquer" led and revealed him—invincible to the last.

WILL'S "RELIQUES": "THIS WIDE AND STILL MYSTERIOUS EARTH"

Interwoven always with the love of his actor son (as of all his children) was his own and that son's devotion to the other immanent spirit of this memoir—my mother. That devotion is characteristicly expressed in a poem by Will himself, written whimsically to her as from a latter-day knight to his "gentle lady," yet pensively expressing that aspiration of my father for "the life that gifts us with the divinest love."

During the year and a half after my brother Will's death, I spent many months in deciphering, copying and typing his unpublished writings—poems, stories, essays, philosophical and random observations of men and nature—scattered through some fifty or more notebooks and manuscripts. The whole comprise a typed volume of about one hundred thousand words, never intended for any eye but his own,—a Book of "Reliques," whose variety, scope and depth of thought are astounding in their imaginative maturity, as the expression of a boyhood from twelve years of age to just twenty.— (Later, I collected Will's letters in a typed volume of similar length.)—Unravelling those pencilled thoughts from their snarled labyrinths, and re-living my brother's inner life in imagination, my own life was transformed in the process, and owes to his a creative debt that involves my whole subsequent labours as a writer.

In one of those notebooks of Will's, I found this unfinished whimsical poem by him to my mother alluded to above—a self-revealing tribute of fleeting youth, that may fittingly conclude this chapter of elegy in my father's kindred life:

"This wide, and still mysterious earth, So bountiful of all her charms, So strangely good in solid worth, So filled with cities, lakes and farms

"Hath not on sea or broad dry land, On shiny spots or shady, A thing as fair and neatly planned As my gentle lady.—

"Not for her blue eyes' melting light And not because her teeth are pearls, Not for her soft skin, lily white, And not because her front hair curls, "And not because her clear, low voice, Like some far-pealing magic bell, Makes all the language of her choice To hold me in a magic spell:

"For all the charms that be of flesh
Are fleeting as the warmth of air,
A prey to Fate's fine-woven mesh,
And Age and Death the bounty share.

"But in the eyes whose light will dim, And to the cheeks whose glow will fade, To all that's prey to Nature's whim, To every light that Time may shade,

"To every grace that others know,
Which, therefore, I with others share,
There is a grace beyond all show—
A grace which only she can wear.

"To me, each feature hath a look, Each word she speaks a sound for me, Which all the thrusts of Time shall brook And, still unchanged, shall always be.

"Though fate should part our coming years. .

CHAPTER XXIV

RECUPERATION

"An Arrant Knave" and "Colonel Tom"

New York—Shirley—Cohassett—On Tour—Boston

Feb., '89-Feb., '90

OLD FRIENDSHIPS; OCCULTISM; COL. SELLARS' PUBLISHING FIRM

To steele mackage, the death of his son was a loss wholly irreparable. To the art of the theatre, it was also the loss of a very noble potentiality, just beginning to flower.

"No young man in the profession," wrote William Winter, "was more richly endowed with talent, or had a more promising future."

The blow to my father's health and work was staggering. Its effect was continuous throughout the remainder of his life. During the six months immediately following the catastrophe, it was almost paralysing to his usually buoyant and executive spirit.—A press item, the following April, commented:

"Steele MacKaye, the handsome, thoughtful student of men and affairs, is rarely seen about town now. His recent domestic bereavement has told heavily on him. He is graver and more reserved than ever."

For a while, he turned again to those investigations of occultism which had once engaged his scientific interest, but now were imbued with a half-hopeless craving for some consoling knowledge of life beyond death. Toward this search, his devoted friend since *Monaldi* days, Frank B. Carpenter, artist and occultist, was sympathetically urgent.—On Feb. 27, '89, he wrote to him:

"Dear Steele—I have an invitation for you, Dr. Bradley, Judge Brady and Prof. Doremus, for Saturday ev'g at 8 o'c—for the special séance, with Mrs. D——, of whom I told you. She is a lady of refinement, not a public medium, and desires no publicity. Let us see if we cannot find out something of the law of these manifestations of an invisible force and intelligence."

From his home at Norton, Mass., which had so hospitably succoured our small tribe in the winter crisis of '81-'82, our "Uncle" William E. Payson (for whom Will was named) wrote to my father:

"My dear afflicted old-time Brother-May * is to be with us to-morrow with Hazel. Can't you run on for over Sunday or longer?-We can

^{*} My mother.

day-dream a bit, and perhaps—now we are older and more practical—something may materialise, who knows! . . . I think a great deal about your philosophy in book form. What a fortune to you and your publishers!—Can't we get up a publishing firm ourselves? You see, I begin to speculate. I suppose it is the Colonel Sellars in me. . . . With a soul full of love and fervent, honest interest in you, dear James, I am, as of yore, your own W——."

At the home of this congenial and affectionate Colonel Sellars he made then a brief visit. Even his own Utopian vision, however, hardly beheld a roseate "fortune" in a jointly organised "philosophical" publishing firm! Instead he turned—now very wearily—to his play writing.

POVERTY: A BATTLING ARTIST; THE HEART OF THE WHIRLWIND

Though his Paul Kauvar was still playing, with great success, on tour and in New York City,* yet by that time its receipts had been diverted from the author. Following his son's death, in a dazed anguish of sorrow and illness, he bent his faculties, by sheer will, to create new plays and to revise old ones, with at times an almost extinguished hope of rescuing from stark poverty all that he now chiefly lived for—his wife and children, in whose potentiality as artists and thinkers he felt, self-tormentingly, a proud and boundless faith.

Deprived of the comrade son, whom he had planned to cast in the leading rôle of his next production, he became dimly aware, in turning once more to his play writing, that perhaps nothing he could create might ever serve to bring worldly relief and fortune—since ever more clearly he beheld his own aims and powers utterly at war with the established commercial objects of his profession. Yet in this strange battle of dreams and commerce, this stranger visionary beheld himself, as dramatist, the "successful" author of plays whose total commercial earnings aggregated some millions of dollars; and as theatrical manager, a fellow member, with speculative business men, of a Broadway "Manager's Protective Association!" When before—or since—did ever such an association † hold such an anomalous member?

* At People's Theatre, one week, Jan. 28, '89; at Grand Opera House, one week, Feb. 25.

[†] The New Orleans Picayune, Nov. 20, '89, contained this item: "E. E. Rice, Henry C. Janet, Steele MacKaye and Frank W. Sanger, of the Managers' Protective Association, have gone to Washington, to confer with the interstate railroad commissioners about reducing fares for travelling theatrical companies."

Before long we shall see three new productions, almost simultaneously, issuing from his strenuous labours, yet-blind as he had shown himself, in the past, to the aims and methods of self-interest in business bargaining-what better hope could the future hold than the past, that the money rewards of these new works would not again, and again, he snatched from his grasp?-The mere thought was maddening, and the more vividly he at times glimpsed it, the more inveterately he determined to match himself with the money-making specialists-and to win. Unconquerable tenacity was in his blood. For himself alone, he might have turned, with deep relief, to the pursuits of art and philosophy, per se-regardless of poverty. But for the sake of those he had brought into a battling world, he would himself battle to the death.—And this he did .- Thus this story of Steele MacKaye, had I but the powers to depict it in all its truth, would reveal itself as the epic of a battling artist-individually at war with colossal forces opposed to the very existence of art, which none the less holds the only seat of eternal survival in that heart of the whirlwind which itself is passive—the heart of serene meditation and selfless love.

These reflections are pertinent to the following excerpts from his letters to my mother, sent to her in Shirley, chiefly from his rooms in the Alpine Apartments, New York, during the five months after the crisis of the last chapter. The first is undated:

"PEGGING AWAY"; CLOD AND COURTIER FOR MRS. LANGTRY; ARTICLE ON STAGE SETTING

"Since Will's death, it is exceedingly difficult for me to attach myself to any fact, or hope, related to this world. I cannot describe to you the battle I have to keep my mind on what is going on about me. Work—enterprise of any kind is a fearful effort to me. This is doubtless due to the deep-seated fatigue caused by long strain and heart-wearying sorrow. I have to work slowly." . . . (Feb. 4, '89): "I send you a Harper's Weekly, thinking you may like to see the interview with me—concerning stage setting—published in this number.*—I am to read play to Mr. Rosenquest, of the 14th Street Theatre, to-morrow at 2 p.m." . . . (Feb. 6, '89)—"I am trying now to rush through Clod and Courtier in time to submit it to Mrs. Langtry before she goes away. I am also finishing an elaborate prompt copy of An Arrant Knave for Robson.—I must and will get this money for our Washington home. Meantime I shall run up to Shirley every time I can escape from slavery here. I shall lay flowers for you on Will's grave each week."

^{*} A Phila. editorial, Feb. 18, '89, said: "The American drama is discussed in the last number of *Harper's Weekly* by six American playwrights—Augustin Daly, Edward Harrigan, Bronson Howard, Steele MacKaye, William Gillette and J. S. Wilson."

(Feb. 10—Hotel Chamberlin, Washington): "While I am here, I shall look about to secure us a home for next season. I feel sure you will be delighted with Washington.* . . . Poor dear Percy! I hope he will not be too lonely. My heart goes out to the precious boy, as I think of him all alone in Groton, working so manfully, away from us all." . . . (Feb. 13):—"I had a talk with Judge Gildersleeve and am encouraged.—I feel that we may have many blessed days before us, surrounded by the love of our glorious children, for they are all of them a plane above the best of the general crowd."

A NEW PLAY; SEVERE ILLNESS; "BOOT-BLACK, VALET, OR BARTENDER ?"

(The Alpine, March 20):—"I arrived safely. Rosenquest—who seems my only hope regarding A Noble Rogue—is out of town. While awaiting his return, I am devoting all my energy to writing a new play.† If he fails me, I fear I shall have to dispose of my prospective interest in Paul Kauvar for the best sum I can get." . . . (April 3): "I am working at an enterprise from which I hope much. I shall try to get to Shirley before Percy's vacation ends. I am rereading The Unseen Universe. I cherish thoughts of us all together again, in a dear little house with our boys in Washington."

(April 8): "At last, dear heart, I can tell you all. I have been illso ill with nervous prostration that I put myself in care of Dr. Zolnowski, at his establishment, where he absolutely forbade me to do business or write letters. But I wrote you, as often as I could, lying in bed. During ten days he has helped me enormously. Now I am out and will hustle to get you some money. . . . I am absolutely bankrupt and, if I had not credit at the restaurant, would starve. But now, with strength returning, I shall forget sorrow in the heat of the fight. I shall lay the leaf you sent me on our precious Will's grave. . . . I send you a remarkable book by Oliphant, called Scientific Religion.—Only a little more strain and the dawn of a nobler day will appear in our leaden sky. . . . Now I must hurry away to look for work—and the \$25 for you. I will wire when I bank it." . . . (April 9th, '89) "Only \$20 to bankso I will not wire, as every penny now is precious." . . . (April 19):-"Your sweet and precious letter has just come. How I would delight to spend the dear Easter days with you. . . . But I am trying to drive through a new play, to which I have given the title of A Lucky Lie. I A character of the Tom Ochiltree type furnishes a good deal of fun. It is a society comedy which I think I can finish quickly. In driving haste-but boundless love-your James."

(April 20)—"My own dear angel wife—Your dear letter of yester-day has just arrived—with the five dollars! I shall not send it back—nor use it, but I shall keep it with the hope that I may soon take it back to you. . . . It is your need in Shirley that drives me wild with anxiety.

Later named Col. Tom.

^{*} At Washington we spent the following two winters. † Unnamed. Later called Col. Tom.

Don't worry about me. I can work well now; that means ultimate deliverance. Meantime, I am perfectly happy on a 25-cent dinner. My watch has not gone *—but if it has to go, I will take it to Kirkpatrick, a very rich jeweller, who is a warm friend of mine. He will give me a good sum and keep the watch till redeemed.—I enclose a letter I wrote you yesterday, but forgot to post. You know what an unfortunate wretch I am about posting letters.—Better luck to this! . . . Oh, how utterly empty—inane—contemptibly silly life is, except for the little golden thread of pure unselfish love which is here-and-there woven into the coarse web of this world's affairs.—Soul, spirit, heart—all are with you, night and day!"

(About the middle of May): "I have failed to dispose of A Noble Rogue and I am still plodding on with Ethel Deane. † Evidently you don't like this title, as you take no notice of it. . . . I am sometimes tempted to abandon everything connected with the theatre, and begin life over, as a boot-black, news-vender, or valet. I think I might make a polite and useful valet.-If I could only make shoes-or peddle pins! What sort of a bartender do you think I would make? By Jove! I must get a job in a grog-shop. Any service to vice is well paid. . . . Don't mind me! Long suppressed gall will accumulate to the exploding point at last. If I cannot serve any of you, I can at least love-with tears of gratitude that I have known such precious souls in this hideous world. But I will still hope, for I don't want to become a cause of grief, as well as a lack-use. . . . I put my arms about each of you and hold you close to my heart. Kiss my treasures for me. What joy and strength could I do it for myself! Good-bye, dear woman. With God's help, I will do something yet."

(May 26): "I am pegging away at Ethel Deane, to which I shall give a new title, as soon as I can find one to suit me. It is very slow work. I have written a vast amount of rubbish which I have rejected, and started again with a new idea. How long before I shall get the 2nd Act right, I cannot imagine.—I plod on with the dumb patience of a desperate man lost in the desert, still hoping to stumble upon a spot of green refreshing earth, where he may find a moment's rest. . . . I am also hard at work directing the painting of the scenery and the making of costumes for An Arrant Knave. This interferes materially with progress upon the play. . . . Yesterday Emmie kindly let me have eight dollars, which was a God-send to me. . . . May (Monroe) has always been like one of my own children, and is associated in my memory with the most precious hours I ever spent with my noble boy—hours when we were studying together the elemental truths of a great philosophy. . . . I long to know of her welfare."

^{*} Cf. pages ii, 141, 142 and ii, 291. † Later named Col. Tom.

SCENE PAINTERS: COL. TOM NAMED; WILL'S PICTURE; "MY LIFE RADICALLY CHANGED"

(June 7): "Your letter, enclosing all the dear missives of love from the children, found me in the midst of the hardest work-appointments with costumer, scene-painter and Judge Gildersleeve. . . . Thank God the picture of Will is as good as it is-altho' anything but satisfactory. As I look at it, there seems nothing on earth too precious to sacrifice for the certainty that I shall see his beautiful face—and hear his living voice again. My heart never ceases its laments-with every pulse there escapes a dumb, helpless, hopeless cry after our angel boy. But I must force my thoughts to feel he is not dead, for-when I realise itstrength goes, and I grow so sick and faint-of-heart that I cannot work at all. . . . Regarding the grocer, it will not help matters for him to come to me. It will only add another strain to the almost broken back of that proverbial camel. . . . I am delighted to hear of that room in Shirley.* I think I shall be able to work well there.-If I can raise enough money to keep us cosy until I can finish my play, which I have converted into a comedy and entitled Col. Tom. I will hurry up to Shirley at once. . . . I have Will's book of lessons that dear Arthur typed and gave him. I shall keep it with the greatest care. Part of the work I want to do this summer is to get this portion of my practical work † revised and ready for publication. . . . I received a lovely letter from our dear Jack, I who is getting on nobly. He is another wonder of loving manliness.'

(June 13):- "Since my last terrible illness at Dr. Zolnowski's, I have been improving slowly, but with apparent certainty. Meantime, I have disciplined myself with unrelenting severity. Every habit of my life that seemed calculated to unfit me to perform all my best functions -I have radically changed. I am early to bed and early to rise. eventually to make me 'wealthy and wise'! For months I have not smoked a single cigar-and shall never smoke another. I have taken no stimulant while at work—and rarely otherwise except when attacked by fatigue that emphatically demanded it. . . . Night and day, I dream of a time when, free of all debt, I can secure to the precious ones I love so much, and have unthinkingly neglected too much-complete independence and every fair chance for a prosperous life.

† On the Philosophy and Art of Expression—his comprehensive work in many volumes, which he had constantly in mind to complete for publication, but never got the opportunity. Cf. page ii, 267.

† His son, James MacKaye, called "Jack," or "Jamie," in the family. He was then seventeen, and earning his living in Washington.

^{*&}quot;That room in Shirley" was one in the house of our neighbour, Rev. Seth Chandler, still known as "the Emerson Room," where R. W. Emerson used to stay on his visits to Shirley. Now known as the Elliott house, it is the same room where the first drafts of the last chapters of this memoir have been written, in the winter and early spring of 1926: beside the biographer's chair—his Emerson footstool, wrought of old green carpet, salvaged—years ago -by his friend, Frank Lawton, from Ralph Waldo's front hall, in Concord.

"NEW PROSPECTS"; "LOVELY DREAMS" OF SHIRLEY; NAT GOODWIN

"I just begin to see the seed I have sown sprouting. New prospects are opening. It looks now as though I might have 'A Noble Roque' produced the last of August, and 'Col. Tom' about Nov. 1st. Meantime, Oct. 1st, 'An Arrant Knave' will be produced. . . . En attendant, I have had a letter from a publishing house, that furnishes letters to various periodicals, asking me to give them a monthly letter for which they will pay \$50. I have furnished them one,* and received the \$50 to-day—the first money I have earned in months. I send you \$30,-\$20 in this envelope, and \$10 in another. Thank God it has come!—I send the \$10 in a letter to Percy, as part payment for a suit of clothes for that precious boy. It is torture to me that I can do so little-but better times are coming. The moment I can, I shall go to Shirley, and go to work in the little room of which I already have lovely dreams." † (June 28):-"I send you some pictures of our dear dead boy. Sarony is to have a box made to preserve the negative carefully. With this the children, for years to come, can always command a clear, fresh picture of their precious brother. . . . I long to escape from the turmoil and oppressive air of this restless city."

(July 1):—"I have said little about my horrible experience here, for you have had enough to worry you. . . . I hoped, as you did, that syndicate might open up a field of work in which I might earn a certain amount every month. But they have not yet published my article, How Plays are Written, nor sent me an order for another, so I fear that my work is not sensational or flippant enough for newspaper use. . . . I am very anxious about Aunt Sadie and you. I will see the doctor about your symptoms. . . . I am heartsick that I cannot go to Shirley and carry those dear children at least a few firecrackers. It will be a melancholy 4th to us all. I was to have read Col. Tom to Nat Goodwin yesterday, but could not get it ready. Now the only time he can give me is next Sunday, so I must stay here until after that.-Dear noble Hal and Jack will be with you from Washington before I can. Hug them for me as a foretaste of the embraces I'm in training to give them myself. . . . I thank God dear Percy has escaped serious consequences from his accident.—I miss very much his jolly letters." . . . (July 3):

† Cf. footnote on page ii, 212. These "lovely dreams" of work on his philosophy at Shirley that summer were not to be realized, for other work—on his plays and their stage productions—gave him no opportunity for the serener

labours of reflection.

^{*}This article, by Steele MacKaye, "How Plays are Written," was published July 27, 1889, and was widely syndicated. It commences: "Plays are not written: they are rewritten." This aphoristic phrase, since widely quoted, has been ascribed, by mistake, to another dramatist, Boucicault.—On calling this reference to the attention of Mr. Townsend Walsh (the biographer of Boucicault), Mr. Walsh has told me (in 1926) that he knows of no definite data or reason for ascribing the phrase to Boucicault.—Steele MacKaye's inveterate custom of rewriting his own plays many times doubtless caused him to coin the opening phrase of his article, which—syndicated, in July, '89,—was widely commented upon as his utterance at the time. See excerpt from his article on page ii, 216.

—"I cannot tell you how wretched I am at your unhappy condition and illness, and my own impotence to be more helpful. These times are testing our courage and our faith in the decency of God to the utmost.—Grief that corrodes the very core of the heart, cares that harass every fibre of the brain, have been showered upon us thick and fast. . . . I enclose \$20 which I have borrowed of Col. Clark for a week. Meantime, I will strike some one else for the money to pay him, and so dodge about as not to injure myself here any more than I can help. It keeps me alert and busy, and makes things more lively than blissful.—But let us laugh at it all, for it will pass away, and love—which is all of life that is divine—will claim its triumph here, or hereafter—and before very long. . . . I am working hard to get Col. Tom ready to read to Goodwin on Sunday.* May luck cross my path at last!"

"A GAMBLING NOVICE"; "THE THREE FAIRIES—PATIENCE, TRUSTWELL AND PEGAWAY

(July 4) †:- "My darling, I have a solemn confession to make.-Last night, for the first time in my life, I gambled in a genuine gambling house—as you once gambled at Monaco! It came about thus:—I met my old friend, Morse. ! He said he was going to Phil Daly's-the great gambling establishment of this city—to fool away a few dollars. He insisted on my going. I said: 'What's the use? I have no money with me.'—He said: 'No matter. Come and look on—or, if you wish to play, I have enough cash for both.' . . . I went—to look on only. I looked -and, as I saw others win, I thought how a little luck might lift us out of our torments-and I was tempted. At last I said: 'I will risk five dollars-and every cent it wins shall go to Molly.'-I told Morse to play the five dollars for me. He did .-- How eagerly I watched the ups and downs of those few dollars! At last, when we had won something, I cried 'quits' and stopped my part of the game.—I had won \$15. paid back five to Morse-and enclose you all the rest. . . . How little he dreamed of the delight that paltry sum brought to me, in thinking of the little relief it might bring to you!"

To my sister, Hazel, then not quite nine years old, he wrote this letter (June 7, '89):

"My precious little daughter—Your sweet letter, with its dear little verse, brought a world of happiness to your Papa. . . . When I get home, I'll continue the story of the boy on the iceberg and make you open your eyes so wide that you will hardly be able to shut them again. . . And what lovely walks and splendid talks we will have, my treasure! You shall show me all the places where the Fairies weave the most beautiful dresses for the plants, and I will tell you stories of the wonders hidden behind their work.

^{*} Cf. page ii, 227.

[†] The Fourth of July he always converted for us into a festival of boyish revels, very dear to his heart; so to be absent from home at that time, for lack of carfare, was a last straw to his exasperated disappointment.

‡ Of the Jeanette polar expedition. Cf. i, 432.

"There are three marvellous Fairies that are always at work while we are asleep. They are called Patience, Trustwell and Pegaway.—Patience and Trustwell are sturdy and very lovable Fairies, but Pegaway is the spryest, smartest and most comical little imp in the world. When we meet I'll tell you all about them, and show you some of their work. The curious part is, that these three Fairies always work together, and can never do anything well apart. . . . I saw a man this morning, trying to catch a poor little boy, in order to whip him; but—crossing the street—he tripped on a stick and fell on his back in the mud, while the boy escaped and everybody laughed. It was great fun. He got up slowly—very much surprised, looked around as if he didn't understand how it had happened, and then limped away, covered with dirt and the derision of the crowd.—It is good sometimes to see cruel people come to grief.

"I thank you with all my heart for your beautiful May basket. I have put it (with the lovely duster you made and gave me at Norton) away in a cubby hole in my chiffonier, where I keep my most valuable possessions. . . . Do you ever think of what you are going to do to earn money, when you grow up, so as to be a brave, independent woman, who can take care of herself, and help others, who are weak and helpless?—Think about this, and tell me all about your thoughts when we meet.—I may jump in on you at any moment, so hurry up, and see how many songs you can sing to me when I arrive. With a great heart-hug,

-Your Papa-S. M."

AN "INSECT PLAY": "IRVING AS GRASSHOPPER AND BOOTH AS BEETLE"

Another greeting was to myself. Then fourteen years old, I had been for two or three years greatly interested in entomology. My insect collection, butterfly net (the same used by F. F. Mackay as Prof. Tracy, in Won at Last*), my tin-box of cyanide of potassium, books on Lepidoptera, Coleoptera, etc., were installed in a little "insectorium" study, which I had built of rough boards in our woodshed, where I remember proudly displaying, to "Charlie" Warren Stoddard and my father, a particularly gorgeous beetle of glisterous blue and coppery green, which my brother Will had caught for me in Madison Square.

Imbuing these denizens of my collection with a life semi-scientific and imaginative, I had conceived the idea of dramatising that life in an "Insect Play," in which the human actors should be resplendently costumed and symbolically characterised, according to the anthropomorphic attributes of my insect friends.—This was some thirty-five years before the recent, successful New York production of The World We Live In (by Josef and Karel Capek), wherein the skillful enactors of the Spider and the Ichneumon-fly created a

^{*} Cf. photograph in Chapter XIV, Volume One.

highly novel sensation in a stage-world of Man and Insect strangely resemblant for me, as I sat in the audience, to that world of my boy-imaginings, in 1889.—Those imaginings I had communicated in a letter to my father, who—on receiving them—sent me the following gay message in a letter to my mother (May 30th, '89):

"Tell Percy I am deeply impressed by his suggestions for an entomological play. I think that Irving as a Grasshopper and Booth as a Beetle would be sure to make the greatest hits of their lives.—The opportunities afforded by such a subject for a poetic tragedy of the highest order would have crazed Shakespeare with delight—if it had ever occurred to him. Tell Percy to hurry and collect his Dramatis Personæ and, under the sublime inspiration of their presence, evolve a masterful plot!"

"THE SPHINX OF NEW YORK"; G. A. R.; "HOW PLAYS ARE WRITTEN"

The article on my father as "The Sphinx of New York," * quoted on page 122 of Volume One, belongs to this time. Another press comment stated (April 4, '89):

"Steele MacKaye has recently been proposed for membership in Lafayette Post No. 147, G. A. R., of New York."

On July 27, '89, his syndicated article, "How Plays Are Written" appeared and was widely copied throughout the United States. This excerpt, from the Washington Post (Aug. 11), epitomises his own rationale and practice of play-writing:

"Steele MacKaye says:—'Plays are not written: they are re-written... Honest study of dramatic art; months of evolution and revolution of plot; constant subjective association with the characters of the play, during which each has lived, spoken and acted with intense reality; all this must precede and prepare the mind for the comparatively trivial work of the hand... The longer the dramatist walks, eats, sleeps and lives with his characters, the more readily they will spring from his pen and live in his work.

"'A good play implies, on the part of the writer,—knowledge of human nature, experience of life and art in general, and of the stage in particular, philosophic insight, mechanical instinct, poetic fancy, sensitive sympathies, passionate fervour and vivid imagination, thoroughness in preparation, industry in elaboration, conscience in revision, courage in excision, and—dominating all this,—that breadth of mind that breeds humility, and that depth of heart whose love goes out in charity to all mankind.

"'The stage presents one hundred "pieces" to one play. A piece is

^{*} From the New York World, June 23, 1889.

no more like a play than a manikin is like a man.—A play is a creation resulting from that succession of processes by which nature converts conception into organisation, and through the pangs of labour, accomplishes a birth.—A piece is a contrivance concocted by the more or less clever conjunction of amusing, but generally irrelevant, parts.—Plays, like lives, are evolved; pieces, like toys, are manufactured. A play is the natural growth of a rational theme into dramatic form—developing situations that are the consistent consequence of the contact of certain legitimate types of character with manifestly possible turns of circumstances. —A piece is the artificial putting together of individuals and incidents without reference to reason or probability. The aim of a piece is to titillate and astonish the general ignorance of the mass.—The purpose of a play is to illustrate human life in such manner as to charm, touch, enlighten and enlarge human hearts.-Pieces amuse idle brains; plays delight active ones. Pieces divert puerile intelligence; plays enrich the mature mind."

BRONSON HOWARD, CHARLES WYNDHAM; STUART ROBSON AND THE BOOTH "BOYS"

The following undated letter dates probably from the spring or autumn of this year, 1889, when Charles Wyndam,* whose sister Bronson Howard married, was visiting this country:

"101 West 48th Street. Monday.

"My dear MacKaye: Can you join with me next Friday, at the Lotos—3.30 p.m., for 4, sharp—to meet Mr. Charles Wyndham and a party of our fellow American dramatists? No speeches and evening dress, so we'll all be comfortable.—Sincerely yours, Bronson Howard."

Fifteen years earlier, in London, Charles Wyndham had acted the part of Le Beau to my father's Orlando, in As You Like It at the Haymarket Theatre.—For many years, Bronson Howard and Steele MacKaye had been good friends, though not intimate. We have seen how, in 1885—against the policy of his managerial associates—MacKaye had fought successfully to secure Howard's play, One of Our Girls, for his Lyceum Theatre, and thus launched for Howard there an after-series of successes. During the spring of '88 (May 19th), the Chicago Mail had remarked:

"This week has been signallised by the first production in Chicago of two new American plays that are destined to mark an important epoch in the stage annals of this country. The two plays are Steele MacKaye's Paul Kauvar and Bronson Howard's The Henrietta—both so different in class that comparison between them is impossible."

*"Sir Charles Wyndham first came to America during the Civil War, in which he enlisted as an army surgeon. Other visits by him were made in 1869 (still here in 1873), 1882, 1889, 1904, June, 1909, and Jan., 1910." (Roy Day, Librarian of the Players.)—Cf. pages i, 218 and ii, 293.

And the critic of the Chicago Herald commented (May 13, '88):

—"With Bronson Howard's 'Henrietta' at one playhouse and Steele
MacKaye's 'Paul Kauvar' at another, the unworthy idea that there is
not, and cannot be, an American drama will receive a rude and uncomfortable shock.—It would be as sensible to hold that there could be no
American wheat, corn or cotton. The conditions are no more favourable
to these great staples than for the production of dramatic literature of
the best quality; and now that this latter fact has gained unwilling
recognition, the prejudices of a century will be speedily overthrown.

—It was a sorry day for the Anglomaniacs when the dramatists of this
country learned how to command respectful attention."

In The Henrietta, the rôle of Bertie, the Lamb, was acted by Stuart Robson, through mutual association with whom, in productions of their plays, Howard and MacKaye were now brought into closer intimacy.—Of Robson's beginnings, the New York Sun wrote (Jan. 16, '89):

"Forty years ago, a group of Baltimore boys, since become famous, were wont to 'play theatre' in a stable loft on Smith Street. Written posters announced:—'Boys, 3 cents: Little Boys, 2 cents.—Come early and bring your Fathers & Mothers.' . . . Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth were two of these player youths. One of their boy companions was Stuart Robson, who had come in 1848 from Annapolis, where he was born in 1836. At Baltimore, in 1852, Manager John E. Owens gave him the dream of his life—'an opening'—at the age of sixteen. . . . At this début, his rôle, a sentimental one, had lines strong enough to be tragic, if well handled. But Stuart Robson, stumbling 'on' in his first stage-fright—though a veritable picture of misery—wasn't a bit tragic. The house laughed at him. The more impassioned he became, the heartier the merriment. At the end, the prompter informed him, with a leer, that he had succeeded—in being very funny! . . . 'Very well, sir,' sputtered the rising star of Comedy, through falling dews of greasepaint, 'I am quite aware, sir, of my succès de ridicule! And since they laughed, sir, so highly at my tragedy, henceforth, sir, I shall be a low comedian!""

In 1875, as we have seen, Robson acted in Steele MacKaye's Rose Michel at the Union Square Theatre. Very shortly afterward, he formed his noted partnership with William H. Crane. This had lasted twelve years, and now, in the spring of '88, was about to conclude * in their joint success, Bronson Howard's The Henrietta, the rights to which had just been purchased by Robson, for himself alone.

^{*} Cf., on page ii, 116, MacKaye's "speech" for Robson, to conclude that engagement.

HOWARD AND MACKAYE AT COHASSET: "TWO BEST PLAYS BY TWO BEST AMERICAN DRAMATISTS"

"The Henrietta," wrote the New York Times (April 30, '89), "is drawing so well at Proctor's, that Stuart Robson has decided to continue it for the rest of his engagement, ending May 17. Steele Mac-Kaye's play, An Arrant Knave, will not, therefore, have a New York hearing this season. On concluding his engagement here, Mr. Robson will go to his summer home at Cohassett."

To Cohassett, then, in early July, MacKaye was called to join Robson; and there on Robson's yacht, in bright contrast to his recent dark depression in New York, my father spent several weeks of that summer, among brilliant and congenial fellow workers of the Theatre.

"Steele MacKaye and Bronson Howard," wrote the St. Louis Republic" (July 7, '89), "are summering with Stuart Robson, at Cohassett, Mass., where Booth and Barrett also have cottages. Mr. MacKaye and Mr. Howard are delightfully occupied on the comedian's steam yacht, The Henrietta, while Mr. MacKaye puts finishing touches on An Arrant Knave, with which Mr. Robson will inaugurate his next season."

Here, also, MacKaye was completing his play Col. Tom for Nat Goodwin, who joined the professional party of old friends. Both of his new plays were read aloud there by my father, in his electrifying way, to groups including Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, William H. Crane and Bronson Howard. Howard was especially warm in his outspoken goodwill, which was as heartily returned by his fellow dramatist.*

"Bronson Howard and Steele MacKaye," wrote the Chicago Times (July 28), "have formed themselves into a 'mutual admiration society.' MacKaye says The Henrietta is the best play since The School for Scandal, and Howard asserts that MacKaye's mediæval comedy, An Arrant Knave, possesses 'the true Shakespearean savour, and is entitled to rank with A Comedy of Errors.'"

Robson, feeling himself proudly at the zenith of his native career, dispatched this "American drama" item to the press:

"Steele MacKaye and Bronson Howard, the two foremost American dramatists, will furnish their two best plays to the American comedian, Stuart Robson, who next season will have exclusive control of An Arrant Knave and The Henrietta. . . . No other two American dramatists,"

* Further instance of MacKaye's hearty friendship for Howard is cited in a published conversation with MacKaye at Delmonico's, May 12, 1890.

said Robson in an interview,* "have made such fortunes for the men who have bought their plays, for the actors that presented them, or for the managers who have booked them, as Steele MacKaye and Bronson Howard."

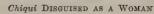
RENEWED HEALTH; SHIRLEY; BLOCKING TRAFFIC WITH FOLK-TALES

At Cohassett that summer, the bracing salt air, the renewal of zest in work and in human comradeship invigorated my father's shattered health and spirits. At Shirley, where he hastened as often as he could leave his professional engagements, sun-burned and bright-eyed, he came bringing us children "rumours and scents" of the sea, with keepsakes from the beaches and other mementoes.-On one of these home arrivals, I recall his driving up to the cottage, with a long, narrow package extending far out of the carriage behind. Unpacked, the delicate, wooden instrument revealed itself to our wondering eyes as a combination-game of bowling alley and billiards, with small balls, struck by cues at one end to knock down nine-pins at the other.—For an awful instant, the housekeeping eye of our Aunt Sadie, calculating the nine-foot dimensions of this new arrival, kindled with consternation as to where to bestow it in our tiny demense; but, in another instant, she had selected a groove by the stairway into which it exactly fitted, standing on end to the floor above; and there it is still standing, like a beam of the house, at this day.

On such festivals of home relaxation, my father would gather us about him outdoors in the apple-tree shade, and there, seated on the lawn, would read aloud to us, as only he of all mortals could read. Here he read to us his new plays. Here also, on one occasion he was reading aloud from Dasent's Folk-Tales of the Old Norse, stories of trolls and heroes, of wild scallywags like "the Master-Thief," and old witch-women who, in dark, wintry woods, mumbled their shivery charms over charcoal fires.

As he read on, tale after tale, country neighbours dropped in to listen, some afoot, others stopping in their waggons on the road. He himself was oblivious, rapt in the spell of the tales, while the long summer shadows lengthened, till sunset was beginning to grow golden behind the cottage rooftree.—By that time, the village highway had become impassable with an odd aggregation of gigs, "democrats" and carts, whose occupants had dismounted to increase the lawn-gathering, or sat hearkening on their waggon-seats, mutely spellbound by the magical voice and gestures of that strange * Minneapolis Tribune, Jan. 1, 1890.







Chiqui IN ARMOUR

STUART ROBSON IN MACKAYE'S COMEDY, "AN ARRANT KNAVE," 1889 (p. 222)



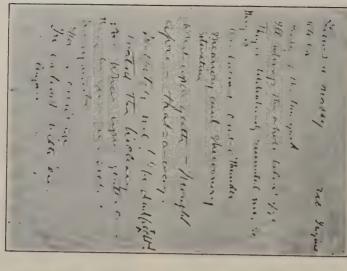
21 FIFTH AVE. (pages 192, 198)



WALT WHITMAN (page 163)

This "Renvick Mansion," at 9th St. and 5th Ave. New York, was designed by the architect of Grace Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral. Here Washington Irving lived. Here, in the same room where Mark Twain wrote his autobiography (1904—'08), William Payson MacKaye died, Jan. 22, 1889. (House still standing, 1927.) In 1888, Steele MacKaye tendered the offer of a theatrical benefit to Walt Whitman, whom he had known from boyhood.

of the Southern Appalachians, written down by Steele Markave, 1891, in the Carolinus, as studies for his play, "The State Line" (pages ii, 180, 285-286). NOTES ON MOUNTAIN DIALECT





at Shirley Centre. Massachusetts: built in 1837; first occupied by Steele MacKays and his family, 1888 (this photograph taken in 1923).

minstrel, with black-curling locks, descanting there under the apple boughs.—That summer at our cottage-castle the new aliases of our minstrel-prince were An Arrant Knave and Colonel Tom, and in the former rôle he now disappeared on the eastern horizon, to rehearse his play for Robson in Boston.*

GILLMORE; A SCENARIO FOR DÉBUT OF MRS. LESLIE CARTER

There he was asked, by Edward G. Gillmore, manager of the New York Academy of Music, to write a play to "bring out" Mrs. Leslie Carter, as a theatrical star. Concerning this he wrote (on Sept. 9, '89):

"My dear Gillmore: I find that I shall be able to take sufficient time during the nights of this week, to complete the Scenario of the play the general outlines of which I laid before you, Sunday, Before undertaking this task-and adding that labour to the others devolving on me now-it seems wise to send you my terms and to learn if they suit you.—My regular terms for writing a play for a Star are \$5000 in cash, as payment for the mere time expended in writing and plotting the play, for no good play can be completed in less than six months. . . . I will write a play for Mrs. Carter upon the following terms:—1st: I agree to write and complete the play within six months after acceptance of Scenario.—2nd: Upon completion of play, to commence and continue the training of Mrs. Carter in the leading rôle, until she is thoroughly prepared to give an artistic performance.—3rd: I will superintend the production, directing Scene-painters, Property-makers, Musicians, and will train the company.—My compensation for said labour to be as follows: 1st: On completion of Scenario and its acceptance by yourself or Mrs. Carter, I am to receive \$2500 in cash as a retainer.—2nd: On completion of each act of the play, a further sum of \$500.—3rd: On production . . . 10 per cent of gross weekly receipts up to \$4000, and 20 per cent of all over \$4000.

"Writing a play for a novice and training her for her work is an exceedingly arduous undertaking. . . . I shall, of course, take great pride in labouring to secure an artistic triumph for Mrs. Carter. I will spare no effort to make her début a surprise—and a triumph over that of any other society Star that has ever come before the public.—If my terms are acceptable to you, I will immediately devote myself to the preparation of a Scenario, and—before starting for Chicago—will get a day off from rehearsals here, to go on to New York and submit said Scenario for your approval. If the terms I send do not suit, we may as well drop the idea.—Please let me have your decision without delay, as there is no time to be lost, if the work is to be undertaken.—In any event, I

^{*&}quot;Steele MacKaye," wrote the Philadelphia Times (Sept. 8, '89), "has been in Boston for a week rehearsing his new play. Booth, Barrett, Modjeska, and others are doing their rehearsing at the 'Hub,' to get more attentive work out of their companies than in New York."

wish the most legitimate success to Mrs. Carter, who is evidently a woman of sensibility and refinement who has been outrageously stretched upon the rack.

Sincerely yours, Steele MacKaye.

"P.S.—I forgot to say that I never sell my plays now. I lease the sole right of production for the whole world for ten years, on the terms I have stated."

As in the case of Dr. Jekull and Mr. Hude, with Mansfield, the financial terms asked by MacKaye were too stiff for acceptance. At the time, as William Winter states in his Life of David Belasco, Mrs. Leslie Carter was in very straitened circumstances. Had MacKave's terms been more moderate, a different history of her début would probably have been written in theatrical annals. On failing to secure Steele MacKave as her director and dramatist, she and Manager Gillmore then turned to David Belasco, whoover a year later—brought out Mrs. Carter in the part of Kate Graudon, in The Ugly Duckling, at the Broadway Theatre, New York, Nov. 10, 1890, as her first appearance on the stage.

After completing the Boston rehearsals of his play An Arrant Knave, MacKaye accompanied its acting troupe to Chicago, where the play opened, with brilliant success, on Sept. 30, 1889, at the Chicago Opera House. The following are some impressions of the reviewers:

AN ARRANT KNAVE, CHICAGO: "ORIGINAL, DARING, INGENIOUS"; "FANTASTIC HUMOUR"; "AT HEAD OF AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHTS"

"MacKaye's Most Ambitious Work" *- "The 'standers' were packed many rows deep. . . . When Mr. Robson, accounted as a warrior of old, heralded by that inimitable cracked voice that has made him famous, strode upon the stage the ringing plaudits kept him silent for several minutes. . . . An Arrant Knave is Steele MacKaye's most ambitious work—undeniably original, daring and ingenious. The rhythmical blank verse is full of epigrams that should live to be quoted. . . . The clever playwright has taken us back into the sixteenth century with a plot distinct in flavour of romance, distorted at times to make room for the comedy element of Mr. Robson. The scenery and costuming are sumptuous to the verge of extravagance; the magnificent settings excited warm approval."

"A Brilliant First Night: † The Chicago critics have used their pens liberally on Robson and his new play by MacKaye. The Inter Ocean says: 'An Arrant Knave is a most fantastic, vexatious work, as full of contraries as its brilliant, erratic author himself. The banter of words

^{*} Chicago Journal, Oct., '89. † Saint Louis Republic, Oct. 2, '89.

is well assumed by Mr. Robson, who acts with such enjoyment that the audience is carried away with him. The play will undoubtedly be a success.' . . . (Tribune):—'Galleries, parquette, topmost boxes, were packed. As Chiqui, Robson made a truly romantic picture—his blond slimness clothed in armour. His braggadocio, his spryness, his superficial cunning, his absolute cowardice were irresistibly ludicrous.' . . . (Times):—'An Arrant Knave serves to give Mr. Robson's peculiar methods of comedy a shading of strong melodramatic relief, and aroused never-failing, quick responses from the audience.'

"A Bold Departure *: An Arrant Knave has startled the critics. They don't know just what to make of it; but all agree that it is a very bold departure. . . . Steele MacKaye has done a great deal for the American Stage. His Hazel Kirke and his Paul Kauvar, one of the greatest of modern dramas, insure him a lasting monument. . . . In his latest play, whether Chiqui is posing as a lover, a military hero, or as 'the sweet wench of the woods,' the histrionic work requires marked ability. The actor practically plays many parts, in various disguises. A strange love motive of romantic interest intermingles rural, military and court life, picturesque groups and agreeable scenic surprises."

"Eccentric Comedy:† Mr. MacKaye's new creation, inaugurating Robson's career as a single star, is of more than ordinary importance . . . a comedy of a high order, which gives Robson wonderful opportunities as an eccentric comedian. Its intense situations, poetic, dramatic, comic, change so rapidly that one is kept wondering how the author will unravel his plot of villainous intrigues, sentiments, heroism, action and comedy of a charming type."

"MacKaye's Mediævalism: If An Arrant Knave was written in imitation of Shakespeare, and if Shakespeare can be imitated, Mr. MacKaye is as well qualified, perhaps, as any man in America to do it, standing as he does as one of the little knot of playwrights, who have contributed to the American stage that which is excellent on it. . . . Mr. MacKaye's play accurately reflects, in its broad lines, the moral freedom of its period."

"The New York World labels An Arrant Knave, 'one of the best comedies ever written,' and says that 'it places its author at the head of American playwrights beyond all peradventure.'—MacKaye is undoubtedly a great writer, and no one who has watched his work will be surprised at such a verdict." §

In the following excerpt of an editorial in the Madison Democrat (Oct. 18, '89), the play is glimpsed in relation to other contemporary dramaturgy:

^{*} Cincinnati Times Star, Oct. 4, 1889.

[†] Saint Paul Republic, Oct. 1, 1889.

[‡] Saint Louis Republic, Oct. 17, 1889. § Pittsburgh Dispatch, Oct. 6, 1889.

"Owing to the centralisation of wealth and culture, the stage is becoming every day more important in the intellectual life of the people, and is eliciting the highest creative talent. . . . Among new plays of quality which have won pronounced success, Steele MacKaye's An Arrant Knave vaulted into immediate popularity. It carries the spectator into the middle ages and surrounds him with the pageantry of chivalry. -Bronson Howard's Shenandoah, a delightful drama of modern life, has filled the largest auditoriums of Boston and New York .- Brander Matthews and George Jessop are jointly the authors of two successful plays, each with a modern motive: On Probation, for W. H. Crane, and A Gold Mine, for Nat Goodwin. . . . The profound creations of Henrik Ibsen, new to Americans, have received heartiest appreciation; and a new historical tragedy, Ganelon, by an Illinois author, William Young, produced by Lawrence Barrett, has created a marked sensation. These signal successes betoken an auspicious rise of original creative production."

SAINT LOUIS: MACKAYE ACTS PHILIPPO; CINCINNATI: WATTERSON'S "BIG BREAKFAST";—"FORERUNNER OF NEW SCHOOL—"POETICAL COMEDY':" "SANCHO AND QUIXOTE BLENDED"

From Chicago, the play went to Saint Louis, where MacKaye went with it and acted in the play for that one week (Oct. 13-20).

"I saw in Saint Louis," wrote later the critic of the St. Paul Globe,*
"An Arrant Knave, by that extraordinary genius, Steele MacKaye. A brilliant work, magnificently staged, it aimed too high above the people. In Cincinnati, Col. Henry Watterson gave a big breakfast in honour of the production, and MacKaye himself gave éclat to the St. Louis performance by appearing in a prominent rôle, Philippo, Duke of Morena.—Amid these enthusiastic surroundings, the western tour was redolent of success."

After Saint Louis, MacKaye returned east, but Robson's tour in the west won continuing approval, as these comments of the dramatic critics suggest:

(Minneapolis Tribune): "The thoughtful interest of An Arrant Knave is not confined to Mr. Robson's movements. The play is the possible forerunner of a new school, and is doing proven work in breaking away from ragtag and bobtail comedy. It is the most ambitious attempt thus far in a style of drama which has been called 'poetical comedy.' From a literary standpoint, it will rank with the best of American playwright's creations. His work avoids beaten paths and is daringly original in evolving from so romantic a plot a character so comic as Chiqui." . . . (Milwaukee News): "An Arrant Knave, the most daring dramatic production of recent times, contains more varied passions—love, deceit, remorse, jealousy, charming comedy—than seems

^{*} Jan. 5, 1890.

possible to put into a four-act play." . . . (Milwaukee News): "Steele MacKaye's new comedy is one of the best American plays. In Chiqui the author has drawn a character, which delightfully blends Sancho Panza and Don Quixote—a creation at once intensely amusing and seriously interesting. Throughout, the eccentric Chiqui dominates—a comedy character of the best type: a coward, yet a soldier; a knave, yet at times honest out of vanity; a captain, yet a gallant;—full of contradictions consistently wrought out. The plot is cleverly dialogued; interest constantly maintained, redundancy avoided. An Arrant Knave is an instant success."

"KNAVISH CRITICISMS"; "ALTERATIONS-IMMEDIATELY"

An Arrant Knave, however, was not an unequivocal "success," such as Paul Kauvar. On a tour, lasting from Sept. 30th till the following March, alternating with The Henrietta, it was performed at most of the principal "stands" of one week or more. On March 17, 1890, the New York Star commented:

"Stuart Robson returned to town yesterday, enthusiastic. 'We have had a wonderfully successful season in the west,' he said. 'I have not decided yet whether to open in New York with The Henrietta or An Arrant Knave. We have four weeks at Proctor's Theatre, beginning April 21. The Knave has had a rather peculiar experience. In some towns, the critics have lauded it to the skies, in others it has had only faint praise. I want to see what New York thinks of it."

Its New York production, however, depended on certain conditions, impracticable (as we shall see) for my father then to carry out.—In Washington, the play was performed, the week of February 26th. During that winter, our family divided our residence between Shirley and Washington, where I was then staying at our quarters, No. 3 Grant Place, having dropped out of the Washington High School, after about a month, on account of my health, to study at home. On Feb. 26th, I sat in a box with my mother, my brother Harold, General Dumont, Edward Potter, the sculptor,* and Miss May Dumont (afterward Mrs. Potter), watching the play. The next day, my mother wrote to my father:

"Mr. Hayden gave us the best box and we saw An Arrant Knave to our great delight. . . . We were all in a fever of enthusiasm. Its poetic glamour is an influence like that of Lohengrin, or As You Like It. The wit and beauty of the lines struck me especially, and it was such a pleasure to see how they were appreciated by the fine audience. As you told me, the play is one to fill the parquet. . . . Gen. Dumont called it 'truly a classic play—one for all time.' Mr. Potter, a young

* Potter specialized in the sculpture of animals, and was long associated with Daniel Chester French, in their joint equestrian-statues.

sculptor friend of Quincy Ward, said he had never seen such an original creation as *Chiqui*.—I think it is a mistake to have the stage so full of people when the curtain first goes up, but it may be only my personal feeling. The papers have fine notices—especially the Star, which says: 'Steele MacKaye's lines are Shakespearean in their English, and the play grows very absorbing.'" *

At that time, I was a boy of fifteen. More than any other play by my father that production of An Arrant Knave steeped my mind in the glamour of poetry and imaginative romance, shot through with eccentric humour, which admirably pervaded the drollery of Stuart Robson. + As Chiqui he was irresistibly funny. I remember walking back with our party toward Capitol Hill, each of us still under the spell of its "true Shakespearean savour," already alluded to in Bronson Howard's words.-To-day, a reading of the text in manuscript (never, of course, intended for a reader's eve) cannot conjure back that "Avonistic" atmosphere of its original stage production. Yet to-day I am as equally sure, as then, that the play, as produced by my father and acted by Robson possessed a degree of highly fantastic charm rarely attained in the theatre. Its effect on my own sprouting aspirations as a dramatist was to set me writing, not long after, my first drama in blank verse —a comedy-dilution of the waters of Avon in distillations of An Arrant Knave, entitled A Philosophic Fool, which I recall reading to my father in our Shirley cottage—to his paternally proud and dramaturgically tolerant amusement.

In Philadelphia the play came under its first severe criticisms in the east, especially cutting in allusion to Robson's acting. Soon after that, W. R. Hayden, Robson's business manager, wrote to my father, asking him to make some alterations in the play's text, urgently suggested by Robson, and adding:

"Mr. Robson has stoutly maintained his belief in the ultimate triumph of the play, but I fear—since some recent knavish criticisms of The Knave—his nerve is considerably shaken. My belief in its merit has never wavered, and through my advice we propose to do the play in New York, April 21st. Now, will you grant my appeal to make the alterations immediately?"

Unfortunately, this communication reached MacKaye at a time when he was immersed in strenuous night-and-day preparations for the New York opening of his play, Money Mad (A Noble Roque re-

^{*} Cf. letter of S. M., Feb. 29, '90, on page ii, 240.

[†] Photos of Robson as Chiqui are here included in the illustrations.

vised and rechristened), so that this request for "immediate" revisions was then impracticable of response. It was one of those hectic junctures only too familiar to workers on Broadway. In consequence An Arrant Knave was never produced in New York.

COL. TOM AND NAT GOODWIN: A POSSIBLE "RETURN TO MADISON SQUARE THEATRE AS AUTHOR"

Meantime, a third play, Col. Tom, begun during his March illness and depression, was now under way with Nat Goodwin, the popular American comedian, in the title-rôle. From the Hoffman House, Nov. 18, '89, MacKaye wrote, in a lengthy letter, giving estimates of production costs, etc.:

"Dear Goodwin:-I have consulted with Judge Gildersleeve and with Palmer.—Palmer will rent us the Madison Square Theatre. We can get it, if we act promptly, from mid-April until mid-October. At my request, Palmer is holding off three other parties, until I can hear from you. . . . It would be strange if my return as an author to the Madison Square, and your début there as an actor, should not make a very unusual stir in dramatic affairs here. . . . The first night of Col. Tom under these circumstances, will draw a most distinguished audience. The Governor, the Mayor, and the best society people will pack the house. Such a send-off in April should carry us triumphantly through the summer. . . . There never was a gamble so devoid of risk. -Take the Madison Square from mid-April; close your season in mid-March; engage a company sure to present the play at the best. Such can be obtained cheap for the summer, with two weeks' clause. Let us know quickly, as we shall lose our chance with Palmer by delay.-In haste, heartily yours."

Had this suggestion been adopted, this chapter might have had a brighter ending. Steele MacKaye's "return as an author to the Madison Square" would assuredly have caused an "unusual stir," and have added a piquant episode to the plot of this life story. But Nat Goodwin chose otherwise, and not as well in the sequence.

"Goodwin arrives this week," wrote my father (Dec. 18, '89) to my mother, "and I hope the fate of Col. Tom will be agreeably disposed of. I took Emmie to see The Old Homestead last night, and take her to see The County Fair to-night."

"WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?"; DENMAN THOMPSON AND NEIL BURGESS

With him and his sister, Emily, to both of these plays went also his first cousin, Miss Millicent Alling, of Rochester, who has given me this reminiscent glimpse:

"The first night, it was raining a down-pour. On Broadway we hailed a horse-car, but the driver whipped up his horses and tinkled swiftly past us, splashing us with mud. Instantly, your father darted madly after the car, sprang on the back platform and pulled the bell-strap, bringing the car to a standstill. Then, after helping us aboard, he strode forward to the driver, and asked him: 'What's your number? You are the first man I ever saw, who would allow two ladies to stand in the rain on such a night.' . . . He was so dramatic-it was all very

exciting!

"At the theatre, your brother Jamie joined us and, at the end of the performance (Denman Thompson, in The Old Homestead) your father suddenly took my hand, with tears streaming his face, and -acting it out, for all the world like the 'son' in the play-said to me, in a broken voice: 'Yes, yes, Millie, my dear! That's just what I ama poor prodigal son! Come back with me and meet the old man. He's waiting for me now by the pasture bars!' . . . Well! I was so astonished, till I saw his eyes laughing. Then he took us all back of the scenes and introduced us to 'the old man,'-Mr. Denman Thompson himself!

"The next night, we all went again, this time to see Neil Burgess in The County Fair. Again your father took us behind the scenes-right into Mr. Burgess' dressing room, where Mr. Burgess sprang up from his dressing-table, threw his arms about him, and called to several actors and actresses: 'Here he is-dear old Steele!' . . . Then all gathered round him, so glad to see him. He godfathered the whole flock, ordered champagne all round, and we had a delightful time-even your Aunt Emmie, who, you know, was usually so staid and demure. Going home, she said to me: 'Now, Millie, don't you dare to tell any one we went behind the scenes!""

Contrasted thoughts were "behind the scenes"—of my father's mind. The next day (Dec. 20), with memories of our last Christmas with Will at home, he wrote to my mother:

"Well, darling, I have expressed to Shirley the little ones' Christmas gifts.—I do not dare to think of a year ago. My heart is burdened with all it can carry,"

FIVE PLAYS AT ONCL; GLAMOUR AND GLOOM; BOSTON REHEARSALS: A NOTE FROM "NAT"

The opening of Col. Tom was now set by Nat Goodwin for January 20th, at the Tremont Theatre, Boston,—the concluding week of his engagement in that city. Judge Gildersleeve, who held an interest in the play, was backing the production there.

Publicly, my father's career appeared then extremely enviable. His latest play, An Arrant Knave, was being acclaimed on its western tour as ranking its author "beyond all preadventure at the head of American playwrights." During that very week (Dec. 13-20, '89), his earliest success, Rose Michel, was being acted, in revival by Rose Eytinge, at the Murray Hill Theatre, New York, to crowded houses. Paul Kauvar was continuing its triumphant tour on the road. In his bag, as he started for Boston to rehearse his Col. Tom, was his script of a fifth play, A Noble Rogue, recently produced at Chicago.—Five plays from his brain, before the public in one season: yet, for income—An Arrant Knave had, long since, been heavily mortgaged; Rose Michel,* was a "stock piece"; Paul Kauvar, sold for ten years, brought no revenue; A Noble Rogue was awaiting revision; Col. Tom remained the next hope. In this estate of mingled glamour and gloom, he set out for final rehearsals in Boston. There, from the Tremont House (Wed., Jan. 15, '90), he wrote to my mother in Washington:

"Best and dearest of women—I have only a moment. . . . I shall send for Aunt Sadie to bring both the children from Shirley, to spend Sunday with me. I will also invite Frank Lawton and Rob Faulkner to the opening. . . . I have had great worry with mechanics, scene painters and rehearsals.—Thus far, Goodwin has proved himself an agreeable man and able artist, and I hope for a smooth performance. But I am prepared for failure, and shall take success without any of that undue exultation calculated to enrage the gods.—In great haste—S. M."

Some possible obscurations of "a smooth performance" are suggested by this note, scribbled in pencil on the back of a telegraph blank, by Nat Goodwin, on a morning near the eve of that first night:

"My dear Steele—I have tried to get myself in readiness to attend rehearsal, but cannot. I am very weak, and have had to return to my bed. If you want me to attend rehearsals in future, you must not be so entertaining the evening before.—Yours, Nat."

"CITOYEN" GEO. FRANCIS TRAIN; "LUSHING GUSHERS OF THE DRAMA"

In the wake of "evening-before" Nat, there followed to Boston, from the Bohemia of Broadway, an even-more-evening-before first-nighter—self-styled on his calling-card "Citoyen George Francis Train, Greenback Orator and Journalist"—whom I recall seated on a Madison Square park bench, attired all in white flannel, with vermilion tie flowing from Byronic collar, as he squinted his hand-

^{*} Rose Michel was given widely in stock, without Steele MacKaye's name on posters or programmes. Such a programme I have of a week's production at the Castle Square Theatre, Boston, Sept. 5, 1904.

some sun-tanned features skyward, under his hatless locks of long-curling gray hair. This picturesque courtier of the Smiles of Celebrity at Stage-entrances was himself King of Clacques, and stood ever ready to place his own "make-up" of the sidewalk at service of the footlights, for the modest tribute (lacking "a box to spare") of a first-night double-pass to the orchestra stalls. Before me, as I write, is a gilt-edged card, inscribed in blue and red crayon:

"Dear Citoyen Steele MacKaye, America's Great Dramatist, whose Biggest Success will be Col. Tom!—Don't forget those two seats—if any to spare! . . . Never mind what I said about going with you in a Box, as I am very enthusiastic for my friends, and—perhaps I overdid it!—Geo. Francis Train."

In the 'Eighties and the 'Nineties, the gaslit garden of Broadway bloomed with thick hedgerows of this genus. They hemmed the theatre round with rococco columns of their journalism. In his article on *How Plays Are Written*, my father thus referred to them:

"If the modest craftsman of the theatre dares suggest to these high-priests of the pavement that such qualities as patience, humility, aspiration, industry, must exist in the man before he can become the artist, his suggestion is drowned in a babel of tongues—across the bar. . . . These lushing gushers are the demagogues of the drama.—Uninitiated, they suppose that the playwright, under inspiration of his unearthly genius, can dash off a masterpiece with the same heedless ease as the critic issues his oracular manifesto which—the morning after a performance—so often dazzles the public and demolishes the play. . . . But the uninitiated are rarely right.—Art is a hard and jealous mistress. She reserves her subtlest inspirations for the tireless toil of a love whose courage endures unto death."

COL. TOM OPENS; CONFLICTING VERDICTS; "BRAVOS" AND IMMINENT "FAILURE"

Col. Tom, a modern comedy in four acts," was produced at the Tremont Theatre, Boston, Monday, Jan. 20, 1890, for one week. The cast included Nat Goodwin as Col. Thomas Larrabee,* Wilton Lackaye, as Prince Koboff, Odette Tyler, as Kate Trelyon, and Blanche Ring, as Ethel Deane. Once again, as in his plays, Marriage and Won at Last, the production effectively pictured a shore

^{*} A composite of MacKaye's Hoffman House friends, "Larry" Jerome and Col. Tom Ochiltree. The latter, jocularly known as "the Red Ranger of the Rio Grande,"—detained in New York by illness from attending the premier—wired to MacKaye: "Good luck to you and Nat!"

scene from MacKaye's boyhood haunts at Newport.—The first-night reception was thus variously recorded:

(Boston Journal): "Enthusiasm unbounded; recalls; a crowded house; plaudits and a couple of speeches *—attended the first public performance of Col. Tom. . . . A work above ordinary merit, with dialogue entertaining, situations well wrought, interest sustained throughout, except perhaps for a too long last act, it will probably prove a

moderate success to author and player."

(Globe.: "In Steele MacKaye's new drama, comedy and emotion are curiously blended. The central character, one of strange contrasts, is slangy, chivalrous, free-and-easy, sentimental, given to extraordinary expletives, but endowed with one of the noblest of American hearts. With Goodwin to set him forth, Col. Tom is a thoroughly interesting stage acquaintance. . . . The close of the third act is especially stirring . . . in the hero's sacrifice of himself for others, for the hero of this play has true nobility. Though the dialogue at times is too talky, the plot hardly probable, Col. Tom-with his touches of pathos and amazing outbursts of modern vernacular-may prove an acceptable addition to the Goodwin repertory. . . . The occasion was really notable. The star bowed his thanks, time and again. Mr. MacKaye made an eloquent little speech of thanks from his box, speaking merited praise of Nat Goodwin, who replied in kind, very feelingly. . . . The play, beautifully staged, appeared to have been rehearsed for a month, instead of a week. The scene at Newport Cliffs—the old wreck and the tossing sea in foreground—is a genuine triumph."

(Herald): "If an audience's enthusiasm can avail, then a dramatic triumph was won. But the truth must be stated: Col. Tom fell far below anticipation. It has not the combination of elements which will give it popularity, and is the least meritorious work which bears its author's name."

(Times): "'Act First, Trelyon Hall, an old Manor House in the suburbs of Charleston, S. C.; Acts 3, 4 and 5, on the seacliffs of Newport, R. I.':—these present the setting of this 'modern comedy.' . . . Comedy indeed! Travestied comedy: Tragical comical, comical sensational, domestic comical, comical improbable, scene twice devisible, and poem much limited.—Great Scott, man! Such a whole-souled right-sort-of-a-man as the author has created in Col. Tom could never be fooled by such a cock-and-bull story as the author himself has offered in his plot. . . But Mr. MacKaye has given us a true and charming character in Kate Trelyon. She is a reality in Charleston, S. C.—a

^{*}Late that night, our "Aunt Sadie" wrote to my mother in Washington: "The play was very enthusiastically received. You could see that the house were all held by it... James tried to keep in the shade but had to come out of his corner two or three times, and made a very pretty speech, giving Mr. Goodwin the praise. Mr. Goodwin said he felt much better when speaking Mr. MacKaye's words, and wished he had had him write a speech for him."

southern phase of the American product in girls of which we can't be too proud.—Mr. Goodwin, as Col. Tom, worked in a few of his merry ways, placed his feet upon the pink-satin upholstered furniture, wore his hat athwart his brow. . . . But he can well afford to retire Col. Tom upon a liberal pension."

(Post): "Mr. Nat Goodwin's friends, in full force, compelled him thrice to speak words not set down in the play. The author of *Hazel Kirke* and *Paul Kauvar* has given us four acts of unselfish devotion on the part of *Col. Tom*, and the end of the third brought a perfect storm

of bravos."

A HOUSE OF DARKNESS; ANNIVERSARY; "COURAGE!-AND REVERENCE"

The sudden contrasts in theatrical life are among the sharpest of human experiences. In one instant—plaudits, tumultuous cheers, a blazing focus of light, the rapport of a thousand votive eyes: in the next—a harsh, low cry of "lights out!" and lonely visions of a

spectral house in darkness.

In such a house of darkness—with "a storm of bravos" dying far-off in dumb vacancies of approaching "failure"—on that ominous twentieth of January, Steele MacKaye sat looking backward into the desolating hour where he had stood, with his wife, one year before, at the imminent passing of their son, Will. Taking up his pen to write, he put it down again; but the next day, he wrote to my mother, in Washington:

"Dear, precious woman—I cannot write concerning the anniversary of anguish which occurred vesterday. At one moment, I felt that I must-but this was succeeded by a sense of impotence in expression which made me shirk the attempt. I was glad to turn to the turmoil of affairs and seek escape from the rebellion with which I have battledwith all the philosophy at my command—for the past year. . . . The sense of loss—the consciousness of heartless cruelty in the whole scheme of the universe-will at moments overbear all judgment, and sweep away all the serenity born of reason. These moments contend with me now, and I dread to think of what these days were a year ago-as a mangled body fears to recall the merciless machine that crushed its limbs. . . . And yet there are times when I positively rejoice at Will's departure, and have a deep sense of his abiding love at my side. -Such hours only come when my nerves have some rest from my bitter struggle. I have to show the world a face full of the winsome triumph of success, when in reality-if I dared to think, I would be overwhelmed with my desperate situation. Every thought that deeply moves my heart paralyses my brain, and unfits me for the fight before me. So I turn from the luxury of grief-that I may not be unmanned for the labour of love. . . . Courage! I love you more than this poor life will ever prove. Benedictions—and reverence.—S. M."

CHAPTER XXV

"MONEY MAD"

New York—Washington—Shirley

Feb., '90—Sept., '90

"GREAT FINANCIAL STRAITS"; -- "STOIC STRENGTH"

HENCEFORWARD THE LONG ACCUMULATED STRESS OF MONEY TORments gathered ever-increasing momentum. Col. Tom closed its week's run in Boston on January 25th. The next morning, my father wrote to my mother in Washington:

"Well, dear heart, the week has passed with no good financial result for me. The expenses of a special cast, engaged for this week of production, Judge Gildersleeve agreed to share with Mr. Goodwin. result is that the royalties from the play have been more than exhausted. Judge Gildersleeve himself is in terrible financial straits; so it is very difficult for him to do what he would like to do for me. He has seen two performances and is delighted with the play, but he deems Goodwin incapable of fully portraying Col. Tom. . . . The more dramatic portions Goodwin certainly fell far short of realising. though the play was received nightly with the heartiest laughter, the deepest attention and enthusiastic applause, I am unable to say, as yet, whether it was a popular success or not. The receipts fell short of The Gold Mine * about \$100, on the week. . . . I am so driven for ready money that I have stopped over in the hope of placing A Noble Roque at the Boston Museum. When this straw of hope is grasped, or lost, I shall return to New York to discuss the fate of Col. Tom with Judge Gildersleeve. Meantime I shall strain every nerve to secure you immediate relief. . . . (I had a lovely time with dear Aunt Sadie and the children. I saw them off for Shirley last Wed. morning.) . . . If ever there was a crushing moment in my life it is now-but I will not be crushed! I will enrich my will by extracting stoic strength and patience from these hours of trial.-With a sad but strong heart, full of deepest sympathy for you all .-- S. M."

"There seems to be a disposition in certain quarters," wrote the N. Y. Dispatch (Jan. 26, '90), "to jump on Steele MacKaye with both feet, because his last play, Col. Tom, did not encounter the unqualified approval of the Boston critics.—This does not make the play a failure by a long shot; but even if it did, Mr. MacKaye would not be the first successful dramatist to miss the mark.—Dion Boucicault confesses to forty failures."

^{*}The play, by Brander Matthews and George Jessop, in which Nat Goodwin had acted that season, previous to the production of Col. Tom.

BOUCICAULT AND MACKAYE; OWEN DAVIS ON MACKAYE'S "TIME, BEAT AND RHYTHM"

"Steele MacKaye," wrote the Louisville Truth (Jan. 5, '90), "although yet a young man, has written and produced about twenty plays, nearly every one of which has had an extensive run, besides building three theatres and opening them with his own productions. His prolific activity recalls another prodigious worker of the theatre—Dion Boucicault. Although seventy-five years of age, Boucicault is as active as a young man. He is writing a new melodrama to be ready the first of February, is under contract to write another play for Sol Smith Russell, and still another for Louis James, both to be ready before the first of August." *

Boucicault died in New York, Sept. 18, 1890.—It was probably during the preparations for the production of Col. Tom in Boston, that Steele MacKaye had his last meeting with his old friend and associate Boucicault. At this meeting it is interesting to learn that another prolific American dramatist, to-day in his best prime, was then present, as a young man. Mr. Owen Davis informs me that he met them both, for the first time, in Boston, when he was a student at Cambridge.† This encounter of old age, middle life, and youth in American dramaturgy, he has recorded in this letter, written to me, Jan. 7, 1924:

"My dear Percy MacKaye—On the afternoon, in Boston, when I first met your father, I had gone with a letter of introduction, given me by A. M. Palmer, to Dion Boucicault. I was, at that time, a student in Harvard, and I was hungry to find out something about play construction.—This was a good while before Professor Baker's time, and there were no classes devoted to such a frivolous subject. I found Mr. Boucicault at the Adams House in Boston, and your father was with him.

"These two great men of the theatre allowed me to sit around for the best part of an afternoon and listen. I was deeply impressed, and my memory is quite clear, about the personality of both of these gentlemen; but I can't bring to mind details of conversation, other than that your father talked of a play he was at that time working on, and managed to

""At the time of his death," states Townsend Walsh, in his biography, "Boucicault had under way a dramatisation of Bret Harte's Luck of Roaring Camp, and a scenario for E. H. Sothern. For Lillian Russell he wrote The Tale of a Coat, and the savage condemnation of this play by the New York press is believed to have hastened his end."

† At Cambridge I just missed being with Owen Davis at Harvard, which I entered in the autumn (of '93), after the June of his graduation. During my freshman year, William Vaughn Moody was a post-graduate instructor there in the English Department.—Prof. George Pierce Baker began his pioneering courses in play construction at Harvard about fifteen years later. These he instituted in his seminar known then as "Baker's Dozen," followed later on by his famous "47 Workshop."

get into my head something of his remarkable technique in building climaxes. So vividly was this trick of time, beat and rhythm presented to me that I have always thought my own box of tricks dated from that day. I only wish I could have caught some of his finer and deeper attributes.—I met him once again in the lobby of the old Globe Theatre and remember being much flattered by his kindly greeting.—Very truly—Owen Davis.—(I am rehearsing a new play, but count on getting off some night to your play, 'This Fine-Pretty World.')'

UNCOLLECTABLE ROYALTIES; GOODWIN ACTS COL. TOM, BALTIMORE

My father's "waiting over," to place A Noble Rogue at the Boston Museum proved fruitless. Though Manager Field, before then, had himself sought out MacKaye for plays and produced them, the moment of unsuccess is hardly the one wherein to approach a theatrical manager.

"I found it impossible," my father wrote wrathfully to my mother (from the Alpine, New York, Jan. 31st), "to get at the great mogul called Field, manager of the pigmy performances of the Boston Museum, so I hurried back here and put the matter in the hands of Mr. Sanger, who is used to dealing with the high and mighty man. . . . Regarding Col. Tom, Gildersleeve believes the play is a good property, but he finds it impossible to get a settlement of royalties even for one week out of Goodwin, who appears to be a most elusive creature. . . . I believe you are the best and bravest woman that ever lived. You take all these disappointments like a Spartan. I sometimes wonder how much longer the screws of circumstance intend to squeeze our little crowd. If we ever have a let-up, what an overwhelming experience it will prove! At present, our financial situation is something laughably horrible."

Before long, however, the "elusive creature" sent an account of himself. From Washington, D. C., Feb. 11, '90, Nat Goodwin wrote:

"My dear Steele—I have been so busy and tired I have had no time to write relative to Col. Tom. Played eight performances in Baltimore to a lot of people and made money, but, as Leonard Grover would say,—'No important money.' . . . If I can get from Gildersleeve the terms I want, I will guarantee to play it and nothing else. If he says 'no'—all that is left for me is to keep my present contract and play it sixty times next season. . . . But I want to give it a chance for your sake.—I honestly believe if Mr. Frohman or Palmer put that play on, it would prove a hit. It is more fitted to a stock company than to a star."

This letter, a lengthy one, set forth Goodwin's further suggestions for changes in the play and for business terms which he desired. I do not know what response he received, but during the "next season" Goodwin did not act Col. Tom, and after that Mac-Kaye was absorbed in his final project.

PAUL KAUVAR IN CANADA "ACCLAIMED WITH FRENZY"; FRENCH TRANSLATION

At the moment of receiving Goodwin's letter, he had just been handed a bunch of Canadian clippings, describing the immense ovation given to his *Paul Kauvar* at Toronto, where the play had opened on the very night of *Col. Tom's* Boston première (Jan. 20, '90).—The Toronto critics wrote:

(World):—"If Mr. Steele MacKaye had never written another line, Paul Kauvar alone would stamp him as a dramatic writer of the highest order. His incidents follow in natural sequence to powerful climaxes. The play, of great literary merit, should become a standard." . . . (Mail):—"MacKaye's Paul Kauvar contains the very essence of Carlyle's thrilling pictures, with the noble attributes of Vingneaud.—Within the space of three hours, in vivid speech and forceful movement, is depicted all that shook France from Voltaire to Napoleon.—The spirit of Robespierre and Marat dominates the surging masses. . . . Scenicly, this grand play is as grandly illustrated."

Concerning the earlier Montreal production there had come to him these ardent greetings of a Canadian French dramatist, requesting "l'honneur" of translating his play for the French-speaking public of his country:

"Montreal, ce 30 juin, 1889.

"Monsieur et illustre auteur:—Quand, la saison dernière, la Métropole du Canada avait la faveur de voir representée sur ses tréteaux votre drama magnifique Paul Kauvar, et que sous votre forte main,* elle s'aperçevait comme toutes les grandeurs et toutes les passions du cœur humain apparaissaient les unes après les autres, alors elle applaudit à outrance et elle a entonné en votre honneur un de ses plus beaux hymnes de remerciements.—Aussi, depuis, dans nos cercles dramatiques et littéraires, votre nom était-il et est-il encore sur toutes les lèvres. . . . Pour nous surtout, Canadiens-Français, votre drame a des charmes tout spéciaux. Fils adoptifs de la France, de la France Républicaine d'aujourd'hui, comme de la France Royaliste d'autrefois, Républicains de cœur—nous vous avons aimé, Monsieur, oui, nous vous avons acclamé avee frénésie, pour avoir choisi votre héros chez nous!—Voilà pourquoi nous nous décidons à nous adresser à vous, illustre Monsieur. . . .

"Nous voudrions que tout le Canada Français s'unisse à nous vous applaudir, ô vous qui avez su faire vibrer la fibre patriotique, la plus

^{*} Cf. "manu forti" of MacAoidh.

tendre et la plus forte! Beaucoup, comme vous le savez et surtout dans les centres canadiens, beaucoup ne sont pas à même de savoir la langue de Shakspere. Vous avez dejà compris qu'il s'agissait de traduction.—On m'a nommé. 'Vox populi, vox Dei!' même ici. . . . Auteur de deux ou trois drames et tragédies, pauvres à côté des vôtres, mais qui ne sont pas sans renommée en Canada, c'est ce qui m'a valu l'honneur de correspondre avec un homme de lettres, un dramaturge tel que vous. . . . Comment pourraisje me procurer votre Paul Kauvar afin de le traduire en notre langue? . . . Mais je m'aperçois que je n'ai donné que trop de force au proverbe: 'Les français sont bavards.'—Attendant une response favorable, . . . je me dis. . . . Votre respectueux surviteur—Auguste Couture.'' *

LONDON, DRURY LANE: WM. TERRISS AS KAUVAR: "BRILLIANT SUCCESS"

I should like well to possess my father's answer to this letter.— In another concerning this play Judge Gildersleeve wrote (Jan. 20, '90):

"Dear Steele: I want to talk with you, about James O'Neill playing Kauvar in London."

Not James O'Neill, however, but another noted actor, William Terriss, of London, acted it there. In the following spring (May 12th), the play opened in London, where it had a highly successful run, despite the fact that Henry Irving—shortly after the successful first year of Paul Kauvar, in America—had revived in London an English play on a French-Revolutionary theme, entitled The Dead Heart, by Watts Phillips.†

"Paul Kauvar," wrote the Manchester Guardian (May 14, '90), "the drama by Mr. MacKaye which Mr. Terriss has brought back with him from America, was produced Monday evening at Drury Lane with brilliant success. Mr. Terriss plays Paul very heroicly; Mr. Henry Nurtle and Miss Millward are aristocratic as the Duke and Diane; and Mr. Charles Hudson, picturesquely repulsive as Gouroc, makes the most of his resemblance to Mr. Irving."

"Last night, at the close of Mr. Steele MacKaye's Paul Kauvar," wrote the London Chronicle, "when the manager, Mr. Augustus Harris, asked the audience if he might cable to the author in America their approval of the play, the reply was 'Hear, hear!' in a rousing affirmative. . . . The Dead Heart proved no obstacle to the introduction to this country of a drama extremely popular in America. An original element of this play is the sturdy heroism of the hero, admirably portrayed by the fervour and sincerity of Mr. Terriss.—The victorious entry of the

^{*} Dated "Ce 30 Juin, 1889, 1305 rue Ste. Catherine, Montreal." † Cf. page ii, 294.

mob into the Royalist headquarters was splendidly picturesque and realistic. The audience applauded the play to the echo."

"ENTHUSIASTIC VERDICT OF TRIUMPH"; "POWERFUL STAGECRAFT"

"The verdict in favour of Paul Kauvar," wrote the London Telegraph, "the conspicuous success from America, was almost unanimous. To call it an 'American drama' would be incorrect, as it has nothing to do with the United States, and is written by an Englishman (sic!), Mr. Steele MacKave, the well-known protégé of Tom Taylor, who induced him to play Hamlet in London, though he has since made America his home. . . . The faults of Paul Kauvar are all on the surface; its merits are a strong, human interest, undeniably powerful; a love story vigorously told; very unusual opportunities for splendid acting, rarely found in modern plays; skilful characterisation, and an avoidance of any melodramatic claptrap. Its best scenes are drama proper, as opposed to sensational melodrama."

"Mr. MacKaye's play," wrote the London News, "omits to turn to account no one of the sources of terror, tender emotion, patriotic enthusiasm, and heroic abnegation which spring from his theme. The work is a piece of stagecraft which only a practiced actor-playwright and manager could have wrought." . . . "Not a discordant note," wrote the London Globe, "was heard in the enthusiasticly favourable verdict on the triumph of Mr. Steele MacKave's play at the Drury Lane Theatre."

These tidings of his play from London and Canada were apportionments of that "cashless glory" which irradiated so many of my father's deeply mortgaged days; for from those and continuing successful performances of that play he received nothing during his life.*—The "laughably horrible" juncture in his financial affairs was now on the verge of another illusory vista of his proverbial "ermine."

J. M. HILL AND "THE SOOTHER OF OLD AGE"

On the eve of the Boston production of Col. Tom, J. M. Hill. manager of the Union Square Theatre (then about to take over the Standard) had written him, from New York (Jan. 18):

"My sincere wishes to you for the success of Col. Tom.—You have done much in your time, for which you have received credit, while the soother of old age passed into the hands of others." †

This sympathetically worded greeting, apparently sincere, now

^{*} He had parted with his author's rights for ten years, before the expira-The had parted with his author's rights for ten years, before the expiration of which he had died. By ownership of copyright, all rights in the play are controlled by his heirs.

† How the "hands" of Hill himself performed the same expert "pass" to his own "soothing"—the latter end of this chapter records.

led him to some important conferences with Hill. Meantime, in Washington, my mother-eager to assist the situation, if possible -was making tentative plans to fit herself for teaching some aspects of my father's system of "Harmonic Gymnastics." These and other concerns of that winter and spring are touched upon in the following excerpts of letters to her from him:

(The Alpine, Feb. 9, '90):-"Night and day I have been hustling for money. . . . Gildersleeve is strapped himself. . . . I am threatened with lawyer's letters for my rent. You have little idea of how I am persecuted and driven to keep alive. Still I feel confident better days are coming.—To-morrow night I read A Noble Rogue to Mr. Hill, who has recently taken the Standard Theatre. I hope to make a deal that will give us immediate money. . . . Percy does not long for me more than I do for him. I am worried about his eyes. Tell him, if he loves me, he will build up his body and give his mind a rest. . . . About the Delsarte work—the typewritten book which you have of Will's lessons with me is the best set of notes you could have. . . . May Monroe, as a special pupil of mine, is better fitted than any one except myself to teach the Science of Expression in Pantomime and my system of Harmonic Gymnastics.—I heartily approve of your taking this up yourself without delay, and wish with you that you had done so long ago. Let us be hopeful. Brighter hours must be at hand."

"AT LAST, THANK GOD!"-CONTRACT WITH HILL. "THE MORTAL COIL OF DUNS"

(Feb. 12): "At last, thank God, I have good news! I have just closed my arrangement with J. M. Hill-commencing March 1stwhich, after that date, gives me a salary of \$125 per week. For this I am to write plays, novels, do special work for him, and serve as adviser to him in matters dramatic. In addition to my salary, I am to have 30 per cent of all profits accruing from my work—he, Hill, putting up all the money necessary either to publish and exploit my novels, or properly to produce and push my plays.* . . . It seems now as though daylight were appearing in the sky of our long night. After I have shuffled off the mortal coil of my duns—the debts that have accumulated during these long weary months of waiting and disappointment-I hope, at the end of each year, to have a handsome sum for you to invest as you shall think wise."

(Feb. 21): "Your illness fills me with greatest anxiety. must not worry so, dear heart. . . . I have been away, doing some work for Hill,† for which I have been paid my expenses and \$50. I send

*These promises of Hill were verbal. How he kept them is revealed on

pages ii, 259-262.

pages 11, 259-262.
† This Work for Hill comprised a trip to Albany, where Mr. Townsend Walsh (Harvard '95), then dramatic critic there, recalls (in 1926) my father drilling Hill's company of actors (Cora Edsall, E. J. Henley, Wilton Lackaye, W. H. Thompson, etc.) in The Pembertons, a play by Henry Guy Carleton. Cf. ref. to Pembertons on page ii, 261.

you ten. I would send you more. But I am fighting off duns on every side: Fowler, the schoolmaster—the grocer we had when in 44th Street,* also the butcher, are serving me with legal papers. . . . To these go \$25.—A letter from dear Aunt Sadie sickens me with its expression of terrible need. My incapacity to respond almost makes me insane. I am sending her another \$10—which leaves \$5.00 for myself.—I hint of these tortures, only that you may understand why I can do so little. But I believe all this is to change.

"BETTER DAYS . . . WE HAVE PAID THE PRICE IN SUFFERING"

"I think I have won Hill's whole-hearted confidence during the last week, and there are glorious possibilities likely to grow out of this mutual confidence in the future, t if health lasts. I shall guard my strength as the one capital belonging to my precious ones. . . . The autumn of life is the hardest time, and that has come to me. But ah, better, happier, more fruitful days must surely come! We have paid the price in suffering to secure them.—Greeting to our noble, glorious boys!" . . . (Feb. 29):-"My gratitude to you and Hal for your appreciation f of the lines of An Arrant Knave-dearer to me than any recognition from the pettifoggers of the press. . . . I am rewriting the first act of A Noble Rogue and revising the rest of the play, in hopes of securing a speedy opening for it here." . . . (March 5):—"It looks now as tho' the play might be produced here, on the 7th of April. I have read Hill the week's work I have done. He is enthusiastic and hopeful of a phenomenal popular success. . . . The enclosed money is from dear Jack. It will help out till next week. What a glory he is!"

(March 15):—"I am so glad you have Frank Steele with you, and are learning to love him. There is something inexpressibly precious to me about the relatives of my mother. My heart goes out to him—every time I think how much of the divine delight of true friendship he brought to our noble Will, whose love he won. . . . How is my precious Percy? I have been intending to write him a long letter. But tell the old glory he must be patient with his tired old father till the new play is out. How I wish he were here, to help me stage it! . . . As usual, I am swelling with pride in Hal: so modest, so industrious, so capably devoted to all that is fine and good. . . . Ah, how many mothers are as rich as you in that supremest fruit of time—noble characters! How deep in debt to you is this world, for giving Earth such boys!—In the grand, old, antique times, when it was not ridiculous to bring forth worthy fruit, you would have been crowned a queen of women, for giving the state such kingly characters.

NOBLE ROGUE REWRITTEN AS MONEY MAD: COINING "A PROVERBIAL PHRASE"

"I can send you cheering news: Money Mad will be produced Easter

^{*}Ten years earlier. At this time, Hazel Kirke was still successfully on tour—eleven years after the signing of the contract, on page i, 367, Chapter XII. It is now published in Prof. Quinn's Representative American Plays.

† Cf. his letter to Hill on page ii, 261. ‡ Cf. page ii, 225.

Monday, with a very strong cast. I am glad you and Hal like the new title. I think, with you, it is an improvement, and I feel that my rewriting has much improved the play.-I have aimed to please that large middle class of unsophisticated hearts who make the great successes for the stage. I shall call Money Mad-'a sensational play of to-day.' This disarms the carpers, who otherwise would 'assume' that Steele MacKaye was 'offering his work as a Shakespearean classic!' "

In reply, my mother wrote (March 18):- "'Charlie' (Warren) Stoddard came to see us and I told him of your new title. He said emphatically: 'I like it; and, what's more, as a poet, I make prophecy! I predict that money-mad will become a proverbial phrase. . . . Do not be persuaded to act in the play yourself! You really cannot bear the strain. . . . Henry M. Alden writes he wants to see you-about a book * he has just written; but his authorship is a secret which we are to keep."

My father responded (March 20):—"A word of good news. Gildersleeve has agreed to let me have \$100 for Woodlawn, t so that pressing worry is relieved. . . . I am still rewriting, strengthening and rehearsing Money Mad. If we can make that a permanent success, it will free us of all debt for the happier years to come." . . . (March 27):- "Hill has been away-just returned-only received money tonight. Shall deposit \$20 to-morrow. Can't do more, as Henry I has not paid me the money he owes for his rent. I counted on it. His failure forces me to cut you down this week. Will square it, next week. . . . I crave your letters and live on them-your words and the boys. Though I am driven night and day, I am desperately lonely, in worriment and weariness indescribable."

Charles Warren Stoddard's "prophecy" (quoted above) concerning my father's coinage of "money-mad," is linguisticly interesting. Since then that alliterative adjective has entered into the language.—In his "night and day" driving, besides the rehearsing of a remarkable cast, headed by the gifted, high-strung actor, E. J. Henley, the invention and construction of two unprecedented stage settings demanded my father's directorship.

TWO ORIGINAL SETTINGS-THREE PLANES OF ACTION-"EXPRESSIONISM" AND REALISM

One of these settings is described by William Winter § as "a complex scene, representing an abyss in the earth, to which access is obtained by a rickety winding staircase, wherein certain counter-

^{*} God in His World, published anonymously by Harper's, 1890, was fol-

towed by A Study of Death, also by Henry Mills Alden, 1895.

† The burial place of his son.

‡ Henry Grant MacKaye, his first cousin, who shared his Alpine apartment.

§ N. Y. Tribune, April 14, '90.

feiters and cutthroats of Chicago assemble." In its daringly original construction, which utilised three perpendicular planes of action—from a great height at back to depths beneath the stage level, suggested by a chiaroscuro treatment of lighting—this scene anteceded, by two decades or more, certain visual principles of modern theatre art. According to my own memory, its "winding rickety staircase" (used for various dramatic action) bore in construction some striking resemblances to that stairway of practicable levels which Jacques Copeau built for his production of The Brothers Karamazov at the Theatre du Vieux Colombier, New York, 1919. In Steele MacKaye's lighting and stage management of his Money Mad scene, depicting a Gorkyseque den of squalour and dusk, the author-producer's method of handling his stage material would to-day probably be termed "expressionistic."

The second memorable scene of Money Mad,—the sensational bridge-scene-was, in its "school," one of striking contrast to the other by reason of its stark realism of treatment. In its kind, this scene was a triumph of inventive ingenuity in practical stagecraft. Its unprecedented character consisted in its use of two horizontal planes of action, comprising the stage proper and (in part) the plane of the audience. The latter was utilised by means of onehalf of the draw-bridge which in opening, for passage of the steamboat, swung out over the orchestra and a portion of the audience.—At a subsequent production of the play at Walter Morosco's Grand Opera House, San Francisco, the scale of this sensational effect was almost doubled by reason of the much larger stage, on which, in the tank of real water, the "telescope" lakesteamer-enlarged from its New York 75-foot dimensions to a length of 112 feet—"unrolled" through the open draw, with its deck eight-feet-high above stage-level, passing through the night in a realistic illusion of soft cabin lights, ship's gongs and marine whistles sounding, which electrified the audience, above whose heads -twenty feet in air, over the central orchestra stalls-the cries of the hero in the melodrama rang out through the auditorium, as he shouted frantically to the play-characters on the stage.

AERIAL PLANE OF AUDIENCE; CRITICS CONFOUNDED; "MYSTERIES"
OF STAGECRAFT

By this use of the swinging draw, Steele MacKaye created a practicable moving stage above the audience. Thus in 1889,* prob-

^{*} First used at the Chicago production of A Noble Rogue, in June, '89, but much perfected for the New York production of Money Mad, in April, 1890.

ably for the first time in the modern theatre, an elevated, aerial, horizontal plane of the auditorium was utilised, for dramatic action, in conjunction with action of the stage proper. Not until the first production of Reinhardt's Sumurun (Jan. 16, 1912), was a New York theatre again to witness the use of the audience plane—in that case, not of the aerial plane but of the auditorium floor level.

Concerning these two boldly original instances of pioneering in the art of theatrical production, there was, however, little illuminative or technical comment by the 1890 theatrical reviewers. Instead, they devoted many columns to dissertations on the contemporary moralities of the play, and to their own sense of confoundment that the "high-brow" * Steele MacKaye-whose "vexatious poetical comedy," An Arrant Knave, was even then stirring the critics to excited pro and con, on its road tour—could thus have turned his "erratic genius" to a modern work of realism, frankly labelled by himself on the programme and billboards—"a sensational melodrama." Regarding the nature or progress of pioneering experiments in various modes of stagecraft, both reviewers and public were then hardly awakened to that kind of interest which now enlists so much of eager curiosity and understanding on the part of producers, critics and the public in general. Such knowledge of stage "mysteries" was then left, with a wonder since departed, to the initiate behind the scenes .- The "historical" reader. therefore, will discover in the contemporary reviews of Money Mad an emphasis upon such matters as the "shocked public morality" aroused by a darky woman's prayer in the play, or upon the popular effect stirred by the astounding bridge scene, rather than upon the art and technical invention revealed in the lighting, stage grouping and mastery of mechanism, which interested my father, as a theatre craftsman, more than the dialogue of this particular play of his.

EASTER MONDAY FIRST NIGHT: "APPALLING CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS"

On an Easter Monday, just five years earlier, his Lyceum Theatre had opened with his play, *Dakolar*. Now, again on Easter Monday, *Money Mad* opened at the Standard Theatre, New York, April 7, 1890. In spite of his "driving" weeks of preparation, the first night was a medley of mishaps and gigantic delays.

"The production of Steele MacKaye's play," wrote Blakeley Hall, in the Brooklyn Eagle (April 13, '90), "was a chapter of accidents

^{*}Though the term "high-brow" had not yet been coined, its journalistic equivalents were made use of.

from beginning to end. . . . At 7:45, a distinguished audience was tapping its heels in front of the curtain, when Mr. MacKaye entered the stage door. Everybody was ready, but it was suddenly discovered that the first scene of the play was not there. A wild scurry ensued. Nothing could be found . . . the search grew hopeless . . . till it became known that the head-carpenter had run away, leaving the first scene in his shop.—A hurried journey . . . scene secured . . . lugged to theatre . . . and at 8:45, Mr. MacKaye, perturbed and dusty, went before the curtain and announced he was ready to begin. From that time on, until 1 o'clock, the series of accidents was simply appalling. . . At midnight, Mr. MacKaye appeared again and explained that the protracted intermissions were due to confusion among the stage carpenters whose boss 'had been taken ill.'—In the end, however, the impression prevails that a play that can survive such a first night ought to run almost as long as the same author's Hazel Kirke."

"It was not only a very large and feverish evening," wrote the Evening Sun (April 8), "but it was a fine, bracing morning as well; for when the Money Mad audience stepped out of the theatre, the milk carts were rattling over their morning routes. Before the overflowing audience of notables departed, they had attained that degree of intimacy reached by the boarders at a summer hotel, or the passengers of an ocean steamship. They made calls on each other in parties, hailed each other by their first names, went out, took supper together, and came back refreshed."

"Oh, my poor dearest!" wrote my mother from Washington, "How did you ever live through that appalling Monday night? From Jack's accounts of the mishaps,* in his letter, it was almost more than I could bear. To think that, after all your terrible, constant, never ceasing work, you should have this ending! I was indeed a miserable woman until, this noon, your blessed second telegram came, and now I feel all is well. . . . What a trump Mr. Hill has been through it all, has he not! It is that kind of stand-by you have always needed." †

"WILD CHEERS"-"POLICE!" BARRYMORE TRIES TO "DIVE IN"

"The great scene," continued the Evening Sun, "came when a draw-bridge was revealed, stretched diagonally across the stage against a background of old rookeries—a most striking illusion!—and the crossing of a steamboat, when the bridge swung out over the orchestra to let it pass, brought forth the mightiest cheers and applause of the evening. This act closes with an attempted murder on the street-end of the bridge, while Wilton Lackaye—as Jack Adams, the hero—is trying to get to the rescue from the open draw. . . . The cries of Lackaye to the bridge-keeper, who refuses to close the draw, the oaths

† Compare her eleven years earlier, undisillusioned comment on pages i, 309,

310, Chapter XI, in relation to pages 259-263 of this chapter.

^{*} One mishap was the temporary "sticking" of the drawbridge, which refused to work for some endless seconds, during which the author's voice was heard, giving excited orders, behind the scenes.

and shouts for help of the four figures fighting in the dark, were almost too real to be pleasant. It made one want to yell for the police, and—amid the wild cheers from the house—it was as much as his friends could do to keep Maurice Barrymore from crawling over the footlights and diving in, to lend a succouring hand. . . . The entr'act delays, MacKaye's curtain-speeches, the acting of Henley and Lackaye, and the drawbridge sensation, created an extraordinary first night."

"PRODIGIOUS MECHANICAL DARING"; "UNSURPASSED IN MODERN MELODRAMA"

Nym Crinkle wrote in the World: "The production of Steele Mac-Kaye's Money Mad was a theatrical event of entirely unique proportions. The audience sat for five hours with a patience unparallelled. But triumph was assured by two powerfully realistic scenes, whose intensity and prodigious mechanical daring wrought the weary waiters to a wild enthusiasm. Nothing in all the imported sensations of English melodrama can compare, in structural audacity and pictorial effectiveness.

with this bridge scene, as Steele MacKaye now presents it.

"The very idea of swinging a causeway fifty feet long across the whole stage for the passage of a lake propeller at least sixty feet long, will cause a success of wonderment. . . . Under the gifted author's direction, Wilton Lackaye, E. J. Henley, W. H. Thompson, Minnie Seligman and Mrs. Annie Yeamans brought to the play their best endeavours.—The play, however, wears a febrile hue that takes it out of life. Money Mad lacks the striking excellences of Paul Kauvar—the lift of patriotic fervour, the softening halo of the past, the integral balance of that work. But it is one of those point-blank discharges that bring down the mob, and will take its place among the most effective sensations of the modern theatre."

"There are no false pretences about Money Mad," wrote J. Rankin Towse, in the Evening Post. "Described as 'a sensational melodrama,' a sensational melodrama it most undoubtedly is. Mr. MacKaye, a man of great originality and vigorous ideas, has laid his colours on more decisively and has wrought his crises more boldly than is common to ordinary melodramas." . . "Every play Steele MacKaye puts his name to," wrote the New York Times, "has, underlying it, a sound dramatic idea. His faults lie in the superstructure.—In Money Mad, his 'dialect' is written with vigour and fire, but the oaths * which diversify it, though they may be lamentably true to nature, are too strong, and should be cut out, as depravity, with the prayer of Mrs. Yeamans, as the negress. . . The drawbridge picture is a fine scenic achievement, unsurpassed in any melodrama we can recall."

"The play," wrote William Winter, "contains six acts and seventeen characters. In its original form, Through the Dark from the first has

^{*}The "oaths" here mentioned were appropriate expletives of vernacular, characteristic of the life and persons depicted, and had as much "depravity" as the prayer printed on page ii, 249.

been accounted an earnest, forcible and touching play . . . then better than now, because less overlaid by scenery. . . . Well mounted, it is zealously acted—especially by Mr. E. J. Henley, as the villain, Cary Haskins. An actor of rare talent, misanthropic and bitter, Mr. Henley is an artist picturesque, authoritative, finely perceptive. . . . In its subject—fanaticism in the pursuit of money—Money Mad resembles the play of Wealth, by Henry Arthur Jones, which Mr. Palmer intends to import from London. Mr. Jones confines himself to his subject; but Mr. MacKaye—because he is a compassionate theorist in morals—diffuses his theme with a glorification of democracy and ends in insane humanitarian error."

In contrast to this stricture of William Winter, which was mild to the "slaughter" of some other reviewers, the critic of the Philadelphia Press commented in an article on "The Philosophy of Money Mad as a Stage Production":

"SOUND DRAMATIC IDEA"—"DEEP TREND OF TO-DAY";
"SLAUGHTERINGS" SURVIVED

"In Money Mad Steele MacKaye has impressively summarised a deep trend of present-day thought. Released from the first great strain of early settlement, the unearthing of material resources, our best minds are beginning to consider: 'Is getting ahead of one's neighbour the highest aim of attainment? Is grabbing—the goal of existence? Is human competition necessary?' . . . These things, needful perhaps in first stages, are now showing garish and cruel against a better civilisation. Everywhere philosophers are studying the next step practical. Meantime genius is mirroring the thought-waves on paper, canvas and stage. . . . In Money Mad, better than in any treatise, sermon or book of present-day life, is exposed—in all its latent and uncontrollable ferocity—the insanity that money-getting breeds in the human mind: the hopeless wreck to which the unending strife, disappointment, shock. terror, temptation of that struggle inevitably leads.-Added force is lent to the plot by being laid in Chicago—the pulse of the money-making pride and ambition of our country."

AUTHOR'S CRISIS; "HORRIBLY SEEDY"; ZEST FOR "SEEKING TRUTH"

Of this memoir the six structural parts have been named after titles of Steele MacKaye's plays, because several of these suggest crises or characteristics of his own career and nature. So this chapter and the foregoing suggest the appositeness of his *Money Mad* title and theme to the inexorable pressure of circumstance upon the peculiar compounds of his spiritual being. Turning from public comments of the press, we may catch some self-revealing glimpses in these hasty notes from him to my mother,—the first written from the Standard Theatre, New York, April 12, 1890:

"I only have time to let you know that I shall begin to deposit money for Woodlawn on April 21st. . . . I lost my trunk through carelessness of R. R. in Boston last Jan. All my clothing was lost. Last week I arranged with a tailor to pay instalments for some clothes. I was positively destitute and horribly seedy. . . . I receive nothing from Money Mad until those who helped me with Paul Kauvar are repaid. This arrangement I made long ago, when I was borrowing money on which to live. There is no use saying how miserable I am over this. I am so used to a purgatorial life that I am growing resigned. . . . I am so glad you like Lyman Abbott's article.*—How I wish I were free to give my time and strength to seeking and formulating truth, instead of living this slave's life with beings who, for the most part, pretend to be artists—save the mark!—With yearning prayers and deepest love for you all—S. M."

REPUTED A MILLIONAIRE; NEW VERSION-TO BENEFIT MIDDLEMAN

(April 30): "I am working day and night † on still a new version of Money Mad that will cost less to do, and be more effective. All hope of a summer run depends on getting this right.—Meantime, the old debts come on me like a herd of wolves. The success of Money Mad convinces every one that I am a millionaire in a week. All sorts of people—from Stamford, Mt. Vernon, 44th Street—are pursuing me.—With a full heart—S. M." . . . (May 8):—"I begin Sunday to rehearse a lot of new people who go into the cast on May 19th, when we commence our summer season. I take the leading part on that occasion myself.—I rejoice that you and Percy are coming soon. When do you arrive? . . . The new version of Money Mad I think a great improvement. I shall keep at this confounded work until I make every one agree it is one of the best sustained plays extant. Business has steadily increased and, in spite of the awful first night, and the wholesale slaughter of the critics, the people come—and go wild with enthusiasm."

This tenacity in the face of "wholesale slaughter" (which, however, failed to slay); this labour of perfecting a new version of his work; of selecting and rehearsing another and less expensive cast for the summer months—himself playing the physically exhausting part of the hero, at every performance making a great leap from the drawbridge in the bridge-scene; this assiduity to make his work "one of the best sustained plays extant": all this created out of a very near failure an immense success of several seasons throughout America—and all this to advantage not himself but another. From its long run, of several seasons, Steele MacKaye himself received only a few first disbursements of royalties (already mort-

† This work was done without any monetary reward. Cf. his letter to Hill on pages 260, 261, this chapter.

^{*} A few days earlier he had despatched to her the letter quoted in footnote, pages ii, 102-103.

gaged, at the start, by accumulated debts); nor did he even receive—after the first few weeks—the modest salary promised to him verbally by a business manager, in whom—once again, as in the case of numerous earlier prototypes—he had placed his incorrigibly guileless trust, as the sequence will reveal. These further notices indicate the results obtained by MacKaye's revision and unceasing rehearsals of the play after its opening:

"A TWO ORPHANS SUCCESS"; "SECOND JIM, THE PENMAN"; "MACKAYE'S FERVID ACTING"

(N. Y. News: April 14, '90): "The success of Money Mad is such as has not been made since the days of The Two Orphans; the crowded houses go wild with excitement, and its run at the Standard promises to be long into the summer." . . . (Munsey's Weekly: April 15): "Even the subordinate characters are played with force and ability. lines, a little too 'talky' the first night, have been pruned with telling effect. The drawbridge scene, which now works without hitch, is the most superb stage mechanism the drama has yet given us." (N. Y. Journal (May 20): "In the chief rôle of his own play Mr. MacKaye won frequent applause for his fervid and vigorous acting." . . . (N. Y. News: May 25): "Last evening Money Mad had its half hundredth performance—a gala occasion. Steele MacKaye plays Jack Adams with easy grace and thorough art. In the bridge scene, the Columbia College Glee Club represented real life—a party of lads going home in the morning, with enough of the cup that cheers to burst into song." . . . (N. Y. Graphic: June 16): "In some respects Money Mad is the most remarkable stage hit of the times. Brought out at the tail end of the season, with appalling first-night accidents, produced at a house unpopular for melodrama, nevertheless, it is a great go—a second Jim, the Penman. Manager Hill knew a good thing when he saw it."

"75TH" SOUVENIR; 40 WEEKS NEW SEASON; 2 COMPANIES; AN "IMPIOUS" NEGRO PRAYER

(A Phila. paper: June 7, '90): "Preparations for next season's tour of Money Mad, commencing Sept. 1, are nearly completed. The whole season of forty weeks is in week stands, except for three weeks of three-night stands.—Two sets will be carried of the complicated bridge and steamer scenes, one set to be sent ahead in charge of expert stage machinists, to insure perfect production, on the first nights."... (N. Y. Mail and Express: June 15): "The tremendous success, Money Mad, will have its seventy-fifth performance on Thursday evening, June 19th. The souvenir, selected by Mr. J. M. Hill, will be a handsomely bound book, entitled The Turned Bridge, bearing on the cover a picture of the famous bridge scene of Money Mad."... (Dramatic News: June 20): "J. M. Hill plans to have two companies playing Money Mad next season. One to go on the road—the other, at the Standard, to fill the time till the opening there of Maurice Barrymore, October 27."

During the first fortnight of the Standard Theatre run, a commotion in "public morals," historicly amusing, was occasioned by a prayer, spoken in the play by an old negro mammy. Certain critics, whose prophecy of "hopeless failure" for the play had, to their chagrin, failed of fruition, concurred with certain editors in accounting themselves profoundly shocked by the old darky's petition to the Almighty to stand by his long established "repertation."

"INGERSOLL ATHEISM"; "THE MOST ORIGINAL VOTE EVER HEARD OF"

"There are reasons for believing," wrote one instiller of the subtle virus, "that the impious prayer in Money Mad was anonymously written by the great atheist, Robert G. Ingersoll, with whom Mr. Steele Mac-Kaye is said to be on terms of personal friendship."

How "the world do change" on Broadway may be surmised from the fact that Manager Hill was decidedly perturbed lest these public insinuations and outcries might serve to *lessen* the run on his box office! Immediately he despatched a letter * to the press, defending the moral standards of his Standard Theatre:

"Nothing," he wrote, "would induce me to permit an impiety on my stage. When this prayer was read to me by the author, my eyes filled with tears of reverential sympathy for the simple faith and devotion of the old nurse, while I could not help smiling at the frank, confidential way in which she worded her supplications for assistance. . . . But the ballots of my patrons shall determine the fate of this prayer."

"Last night," stated the New York Sun (April 20), "a ballot was taken, after the performance of Money Mad, at the Standard, on whether Aunt Phillis's prayer is sacrilegious or not. Aunt Phillis (Mrs. Annie Yeamans) is a coloured mammy, whose mistress has married a poor artist and has fainted for lack of food. This is Aunt Phillis's prayer: †

'O Lo'd! You knows I's a wicked ole sinner; but den, Lo'd, you knows I's allers beliebed in you, an' now dat my po' missy be astarvin', I's acomin' straight ter you fo' help.—You's all I's got, Lo'd, but den you's almighty, an' all-lovin', an' all-marciful.—Leastways dat's

yo' repertation, Lo'd, an' I sticks my faith by dat.

'Lo'd! Let me do all de starvin', 'cuz I's a wo'thless critter, no good-fit fo' ter lib. But my missy, she be a angel an' sinless. Spar' her, Lo'd! Spar' my po' littl' helpless lamb, dat didn't nebber do nobody no harm.—Deary precious Lo'd, spar', O, spar' my helpless chile!

* N. Y. World, April 17, 1890.

[†] This prayer, as drilled by my father at rehearsals, was spoken by old Mrs. Yeamans with a rapt, rhythmic fervour, and naïve simplicity of utterance.

Don't go back on yo' repertation dis time, Lo'd, an' I's bless you fo' eber an' eber-Amen!'

"Judge John R. Brady, President of the Lambs Club, Judge Henry A. Gildersleeve and Mr. Charles Delmonico counted the ballots.— Nearly 1000 votes were cast, among which were counted but 24 against the continuance of the prayer. Sixteen of these ballots were signed, the others anonymous."

The impersonator of *Aunt Phillis*, Mrs. Annie Yeamans, an old-time character actress and stage favourite of many years, was interviewed * soon afterward.

"I believe in the old-timers," she said. "There are only a few of us left, as the old 'super' said when McCullough died.—Well, old-timer as I am, I can claim to be the subject of the most original vote ever heard of—whether or not a prayer should be uttered on the public stage.

. . . Of course that prayer is not sacrilegious! I was disgusted with those who urged such a thing. It is the natural voicing of the agony of the old coloured woman's mind—having only her own quaint idiom in which to appeal to the goodness of God. I try to express this idea. I feel its truth."

OUTRAGED EDITOR ON "HELLENIC CROAK OF IRREVERENCE"

But the up-and-coming, outraged editor of *Truth* was very far from agreeing with the "old-timer," Mrs. Yeamans. In a long, virulent editorial (April 14, '90), he scathingly deplored the "blasphemous" fall of that shattered idol of idealists—Steele Mac-Kaye! It is historically interesting to record this specimen of a kind of public comment, upon the work of a sincere artist, then permitted to the pen of an insincere journalist:

"Mr. Steele MacKaye," he cried in caustic ink, "has posed for years before this community as the apostle of a higher and nobler drama. 'Sicklied o'er with the pale cast' of a great mission, he came to this country resounding with the rhetoric of 'a great purpose' and 'a lofty ideal.' . . . Yet now, in this year of our Lord, he reveals himself as the most diaphanous Pecksniff the fecund manure heap of amusements has furnished to the world. . . . It is difficult to hearken back to the voice of young ambition pleading for a purer drama, while the croak of this irreverence is in one's ears. It is hard to comprehend the chaste Hellenic ideals of the playwright who is tipsy amid the flesh-pots of Egypt, and has put Minerva on a stump to be prodded by Mr. Hill's ten-foot pole. The austere honesty of the young acolyte, who has wrestled for a divine instrumentality in drama, is disturbed by the dis-

^{*} N. Y. Star, May 18, 1890.

honesty of the huckster who asks a Saturday night audience to vote on the question: 'Shall we laugh at the Divine?' . . . We are compelled to notice that Mr. Steele MacKaye never defended the lofty and pure with any more rhetoric than he is now bestowing on the impure and the impolitic: that he comes to the front as the champion of irreverent and ghastly folly, with the same alacrity and emphasis that he once contributed to the defence of a reverent and chastened drama."

NEGRO FERVOUR: TORRENCE, O'NEILL AND GREEN; MATT MORGAN'S DEATH

In view of recent developments in the stage interpretation of negro character and characteristics by such significant native dramatists as Ridgely Torrence, in his Granny Maumee, Eugene O'Neill, in his Emperor Jones, and Paul Green, in his In Abraham's Bosom, the theme of the above comment takes on further historical interest, in respect to this slight but significant experiment of an earlier American dramatist, who sought to express—through the mode of this prayer's delivery, as drilled by him personally at rehearsals—"the naïve feelings of an unsophisticated negro woman, wrought to a stage of religious fervour." *

In June, on his forty-eighth birthday, my father attended the funeral of his dear friend, the brilliant scenic artist, Matt Morgan. Standing beside the grave in Woodlawn, as a fellow pall-bearer, was the actor, Roland Reed who, less than four years later, was to speak, in feeling tribute, at the funeral of Steele MacKaye at Chicago.—The first New York production of *Money Mad* ended June 21, 1890, after a run of seventy-eight performances at the Standard Theatre.

"The play," wrote the Sun (June 14), "could be continued at the Standard with profit for some time longer, but the theatre must be closed for extensive alterations."

"DESERT A BEGGAR BORN"; HOME DREAMS; SHIRLEY FOURTH OF JULY

Worn by his many months' labours in the theatre, threatened by "dangerous illness," † and importunate debts, stung by a futility of "success," whereby he was still held in the city's turmoil and heat by his continuing contract with Hill, the practical results of which were all work and no revenue, he turned the eyes of his heart toward the little cottage by Shirley Common—"tired with all these," long ago named in Shakespeare's undying lines:

^{*} From a statement of Steele MacKaye (Hoboken, N. J. News, Sept. 10, 1890).
† Cf. his letter to J. M. Hill, on pages ii, 259.

"As to behold desert a beggar born . . .
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive Good attending captain Ill:

"tired with all these"... from these would be gone: gone home to the New England uplands where, on that Fourth of July, he held festal reunion with us, under the old apple trees.—The pungent smell of a firecracker still recalls for me the red-and-gold Chinese splendours of those unwrapping packs, which spilled from his pockets at home-coming. And what detonating fun we shared with him, while the crackers rattled and barked like a fracas of fighting dogs in the hollow apple-barrel!

"LEAVES OF THE BURNING BUSH"; THE LIFT OF A HAT

That night, when he was strolling home with us on the lampless road, after other fireworks on the common, glow-worms were alight in the tall, summer grass, and fireflies were weaving their rhythms of pulsating dance through ancient mysteries of the old oak-grove. My father paused, with my mother's arm in his.

"Molly," he said, "look there! How poorly we noisy mortals vie with that serene celebration!—And how expensively! That tranquillity of beauty is given us, gratis, inexhaustible. But ours—our booming Declaration—how quickly it is spent in darkness!... Mere insects—those fireflies?—Nonsense! They are little flying leaves of the Burning Bush—the illuminati of God. When Nature celebrates her Fourth, how futile is ours in comparison!"

One morning later, in "the little red school house," he examined with eager pride some blackboard drawings of cattle, promisingly executed in chalk by his eleven-year-old son, Benton—reminiscent to him of his own kindred drawings as a boy, which led to his studies with the great Troyon.

Long-anticipated and too brief-enduring—those home holidays which set the little village agog, and sent agitated ripples circling to splash on other doorstones than our own. To this day, an old friend and neighbour there * recalls how, as a young girl, when rumours of his arrival spread through the town, she used to make a hero-worshipping detour of half a mile, and walk slowly past the tall lilacs by the tiny cottage, hoping to catch a glimpse of the far Olympian, or to glean the royal lifting of his hat in a salute of deferent courtesy.

^{*} Mrs. Nellie Adams Wing, of Shirley Center.

CROWDS AND COBBLESTONES; TOUR OF MONEY MAD

How contrasted were those quiet reliques of an antique leisure with the blare of Broadway, which now called him back to a durance of roaring cobblestones—and money-maddened crowds! At least it was some relief to have expressed the raging spirit of that crude relentless chaos in his play, and so to have eased its hectic fever in his own blood. There was also some compensation in the public reception of his play on its renewed production, and the increased better understanding of his aims in writing it.—During the next season, opening in its author's birthplace, Money Mad continued its great prosperity on a road tour of ten months, throughout the chief eastern cities. Almost unanimously it was greeted as one of the best melodramas ever presented in America.

"Steele MacKaye," wrote the Buffalo Express (Sept. 2, '90), "has taken an excursion into dear Fairyland. The result is Money Mad—the only American melodrama which compares favourably with the English works of W. G. Wills and Henry Arthur Jones.—But who cares whether a real melodrama is billed Chicago or Stoke-on-Trent? In Fairyland, everything improbable is in good form. Mr. MacKaye has been a trifle more true to nature than his English compeers. All of his bad people, save one, have redeeming qualities."

"PROMETHEUS AT THE KITCHEN RANGE"; "THISTLES FOR FIGS"

Among scores of reviews at the time, the following analysis * of the author and his work by the dramatic critic of the Albany Journal is significant as a contemporary estimate:

'Steele MacKaye is an unique figure in art and contemporary intellectuality. He is the uncrowned King of higher Bohemia: an expositor of philosophies; an oracle and connoisseur of the arts: actor, poet, dramatist, post-prandial premier, and one who has done more for the Delsartian idea † than even Delsarte could have accomplished.—With the finest and highest conception of all phases of acting, MacKaye was debarred from specialised eminence as an actor by his remarkable individuality. Yet his influence has been plastic, very much of the commendable in modern stage methods is due to him, and while he has made actors, he has made managers and stage mechanicians as well. . . . In the contacts of fellowship and of intellect, his coercive powers are conceded. He can almost destroy logic for the moment by his dazzling dialectic and brilliant wit. He loves the artisticly intrinsic, but while he is the prophet of a peculiar idealism, he is a child in every-day practicality.

"He is the author of at least twenty plays. While many of these

† Cf. pages ii, 270-275.

^{*} From the Albany Journal, Sept. 13, 1890.

have been remarkable successes, yet the stage public of to-day has denied of him much that the future may cherish as literature. While his public were in the aromatic atmosphere of the earth-earthy, he was sailing in the odourless ether. They understood only the humours and felt only the humidities, and wished to see only the physically wonderful. Meantime, he was busy measuring life by his own standards. . . . Now and then-since they lack the relative sensibilities that tremble to higher contrapuntal melody—he has tried to make responsive in them the feelings that a folk-song plays upon,—Hazel Kirke, one of the most successful of modern plays, was the product of one of these obeisances of his genius to the human norm. But his habit was different and higher. Repeatedly he has sought to lift the public to his aerie, but a law of gravitation forbade. . . . Then he came down and looked about him, saw the trend of Taste, and began at once to light and heat the kitchen range with something of the Promethean fire.—'The public is an ass,' he probably said. 'It has scorned my figs, and now will I give it thistles.' And he proceeded to prick his conscience to action and fill the manger of the Ass with fodder.-Money Mad is the result. Mr. Mac-Kaye has met the melodramatist on his own field and they are enjoying joint occupation. His play is filled with theatric thunders and turgid villainy. He has not forgotten the necessary 'effects.' . . . Possessed of a mechanically-inventive genius, which might have produced the loom and the mowing-machine, had such apparatus any artistic utility for the sky-fleeces of his imagination and the fields of his Arcady, he startles the audience with the phantasma of a 'real' steamboat and a swinging bridge, that will pass for a notable feat of engineering."

ART AND INVENTION: VACHEL LINDSAY ON MACKAYE, MORSE AND FULTON

This emphasis on his "mechanically inventive genius" is illumined with a striking comparison made by the American poet, Vachel Lindsay, whose vision of the potentiality of the Motion Picture * has made its impress on thoughtful minds. Referring to the inventors of the telegraph and the steamship, Lindsay has written (1925):

"The blending of scientist and artist that was in Samuel Finley Breese Morse and Robert Fulton—both thwarted artists and successful inventors—came to a balance in Steele MacKaye and came forth in great power.—We have the same balance to-day, in a certain form, in the greatest and best international movies and the like."

Apropos of this comparison, it is interesting to recall that Samuel F. B. Morse,† as a young man, introduced to America from France the Daguerrotype process of photography, as Steele Mac-

^{*}Vachel Lindsay's The Art of the Moving Picture, Macmillan, 1915.
†Steele MacKaye's father, a friend of S. F. B. Morse, was one of the first to promote Morse's invention of the telegraph. Cf. pages i, 30, 101.

Kaye introduced, in his young manhood, the process of photosculpture.—The foregoing comments of the Albany Journal critic concluded with these words:

"Money Mad is drawing big houses—and MacKaye is making big money."

ART AND ECONOMICS; CREATORS, MIDDLEMEN AND CIVILISATION

Was he making "big money"? That golden legend perennially haunted his trail of poverty. Since always he bore himself like a prince, while year after year his public successes loomed in the limelight, he was often assumed to be the "man of millions" he might well have been—had there existed then for the theatre any strong instrumentality of organised defense, in behalf of the material rights of individual artists, against the ever increasing power of organised middlemen to usurp their productive earnings.

The truth of this memoir is integrally bound up with a problem common to all creative artists of the theatre, as primary producers of its material prosperity. If, then, the reality of this record may help to clarify that basic problem, and to reveal the essential grotesqueness—irrational and chaotic—of the age-long relationship subsisting between the economics and the art of the theatre, then this chronicle may hopefully serve to illumine one darkling source of knowledge, vitally important to the public health of our civilisation's most dynamic institution.

GROWTH OF UNION AMONG AMERICAN DRAMATISTS: 1878-1926

As early as August, 1878, Steele MacKaye had been invited to join the very first association of American Dramatists (organised by Leonard Grover and Julian Magnus). At that time, he confessed to "little faith in Societies," lest they should involve "dishonest corporations and rings growing out of them."

That first organisation of dramatists was of brief duration. But a decade of dire experience as a battling individual served greatly to clarify MacKaye's views of the total problem involved; so that he himself proposed, in January, 1888, that "the time has come for the organisation and founding of a society of American Dramatists, somewhat on the plan of the well-known society in Paris" *— in short, a militant economic organisation, "with teeth in it." Such an organisation of our dramatists, however, was not to be consummated till thirty-eight years later.

^{*} Quoted, on page ii, 105, from the Newark Advertiser, Jan. 21, 1888.

In January, 1926, the dramatists of America, reinforced by those of Great Britain, took for the first time successfully an historic stand of organised economic defense, so apt to our theme that some record of it here is pertinent and is related to an earlier unsuccessful instance in the year 1890—two years after the above-quoted proposal of Steele MacKaye.

A FORGOTTEN LANDMARK: APRIL 3, 1890: "AMERICAN DRAMATIC AUTHORS' SOCIETY

Among my father's papers are several affectionate letters from Clay M. Greene—a fellow playwright and member of the Lambs—seeking MacKaye's sympathetic advice in his own aspirations and struggles as a dramatist, amid adverse economic currents of the theatre. One of these letters from Greene concerns important matters of conference with MacKaye in regard to a document (enclosed in his letter), which throws light on an almost forgotten landmark of courageous pioneering in the theatre. The printed document, drawn up in letter form, to be sent to fellow-dramatists, reads as follows:

"American Dramatic Authors' Society 1162 Broadway, New York

"Dear Sir: At a meeting of this Society, held April 3rd, 1890, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to secure the co-operation and membership of all Dramatic Authors, throughout the United States, in sympathy with the formulated plans to secure protection of their dramatic and musical works:

"For the collection of royalties.

"For the prevention of members from doing business with any manager or star who has defrauded another member.

"To move as a body, against all pirates of plays.

"To shut out managers who permit pirates to appear at their theatres. "To establish a headquarters through which any manager or player desiring to purchase a play, by any well-known author, may find the address and conduct the necessary negotiations.

"And for the general benefit of American Dramatic Authors desiring the aid, protection and business prestige which it is proposed this

Society shall afford.

"We, therefore, earnestly request your co-operation in this important movement, and would be pleased to enroll your name as a member.— Kindly signify your pleasure by letter or attendance at the next meeting, on Thursday, April 10th, 1890, at 12 o'clock, at the office of the Dramatic News, 1162 Broadway, N. Y.—Clay M. Greene, Howard P. Taylor, Committee."

A GOAL ATTAINED: APRIL 14, 1926: "THE AMERICAN DRAMATISTS"

Those stated objects then failed of fruition.—About a year and a half afterward (Dec. 15, 1891 *), Bronson Howard founded "The Society of American Dramatists and Composers," the activities of which were socially genial, but remained for many years devoid of economic "eye-teeth," until after its conjunction with "The Dramatists' Guild of the Authors' League of America," becoming (in 1926) the present organisation, "The American Dramatists."

In relation to the above document signed by Greene and Taylor, concerning which Greene conferred with my father in 1890, it is revealing to note the successful consummation of thirty-six years of failure and struggle, expressed in this headline of the New York Times, January 8, 1926.

"131 DRAMATISTS JOIN TO PROTECT RIGHTS

Form Closed Shop and Will Draw Up Basic Contract for Producers of Plays . . . Say Managers Have Kept Lion's Share . . . Managers Alarmed, Plan Defense."

This movement arose, in November, 1925, through the initiative of a few thoughtful American dramatists. † On Jan. 7, 1926, in

* In Dec., 1891, Steele MacKaye was in Chicago, in the throes of launching there his Spectatorium, and was never again in New York except on hasty

visits. Cf. Chapter XXVIII.

visits. Cf. Chapter XXVIII.

† Of these, one of the most zealous, George Middleton, has written me (Oct. 3, '26): "Three or four of us realised that the Dramatists Guild had no power, though nice on paper. Our contract with managers was being violated and changed at will. When the threat of 'movie' control came up, we had a meeting of ten or twelve and resolved on action. We got together about thirty of the most representative at the Actors' Equity rooms, and there signed a pledge to forfeit a thousand dollars, each, if we did not abide by the report of our contract committee. Then we went out and got more signatures—hard work, as so many had to be shown. Then, with the aid of counsel, we drew up an indictment of conditions." . . . The original contract committee comprised: G. Middleton, Chairman; Crothers, O'Neill, Emerson, Buck, Harbach, Kelly, Kaufman, Megrue, Manners, Pollock, Clemens and A. Richman (ex officio). . . . The committee for conference with managers comprised: A. Richman, Chairman; Middleton, Manners, Megrue, Davis, Forbes, Harbach, Buck, Emerson, Pollock, Connelly. . . . The committee of seven comprised: A. Richman, Chairman; Hamilton, Kelly, Megrue, Thomas, Weiman, G. Middleton (Secretary). Of these, A. E. Thomas was the "Thomas" Jefferson who worded the opening preamble to this "declaration" of interdependence. Of the producing managers, quick to appreciate the equity of mutual right understandings, the first to sign were Horace B. Liveright and Henry Miller.

For about three months the fate of the "basic agreement" hung in balance For about three months the fate of the "basic agreement" hung in balance between embattled dramatists and managers. During nearly a fortnight, the devoted committee of dramatists were in session with the committee of managers night and day, almost without sleep. The result was an overwhelming victory for the dramatists, by whom—in conclave, April 14, '26—the agreed-on basic contract was unanimously ratified. To that meeting (presided over by Owen Davis), as a fellow member I sketched briefly the half-century background of struggle and failure touched upon in this chapter. their report "to the Association of Dramatists," a special committee of seven stated:

"All of the other branches of theatrical art have long been organized; but the dramatists, without whom there could be no spoken stage, have had no collective voice whatever. They desire to have such a voice, in order that they may express their collective hopes, plans and ambitions bearing upon the traditions and the ideals of the theatre. . . . We approve the fundamental principle that negotiations be conducted with managers by ourselves as a group, with the end of consummating a basic agreement between this Association and managers, to the effect that no dramatist shall submit any play to . . . any manager who shall not enter into and observe such basic agreement, or who, without the approval of the Association, shall deal with any dramatist outside the Association."

On February 2, 1926, a highly dramatic convention of American dramatists adopted this report of their committee with historic cheers which, for some of the elder among them, may have rung back through imagination to an earlier date,—not less historic because of its daring failure—April 3, 1890, the date of the above-quoted document on page 256. That Steele MacKaye himself was in profound sympathy with that document, and may well have been instrumental to its framing and formulation, is more than suggested by his own proposal, of more than two years earlier (Jan. 1888), already cited, as well as by his personal conference in 1890 with Greene, who was one of the two signatories and a fellow officer of the Lambs' Club.

"MANAGER HILL KNEW A GOOD THING WHEN HE SAW IT"

Though it is sufficiently clear (as the critic of the Albany Journal wrote), that Steele MacKaye was "a child in everyday practicality"; yet among American dramatists MacKaye was one of a very small group of leaders whose works were accounted a "sure risk," on account of their popular appeal and demand.

"American authors of plays," wrote the New York Star (Sept. 14, '90), "have ever been the last ones considered by most stars and managers, either in preliminary announcements, or future disbursements. Once, however, an author's name becomes a household word, known as the sure factor of an evening's entertainment, he very frequently can command any price for his play.—Take, for example, Steele MacKaye,*

^{*}In that September of 1890, the third prosperous road season of Paul Kauvar commenced in Trenton (Sept. 6), followed by Brooklyn, New York, etc.

Bronson Howard and William Gillette. Any of these gentlemen is a sure risk and can command large prices for his plays."

Steele MacKave could indeed command such large prices, and frequently got them-in his contracts; but, constituted as he was in incorrigible trustfulness of his business associates, he could not command the collection even of pittances due him-in the too frequent cases where such associates set about deliberately to take their own advantage of his trust in them.

"Manager Hill knew a good thing when he saw it," wrote the N. Y. Graphic." *

"What a trump Mr. Hill has been through it all, has he not!" wrote my mother (April 9th, '90), to my father. "It is that kind of a stand-by

you have always needed."

"You had often said to me and my friends," wrote my father to Hill, five months later, "that, if I would only let you guide me, you would 'coin my brains and make me rich.'-I believed you, never doubting that my life, my abilities, and my future, were perfectly safe from disappointment, or desertion, if left trustingly in your hands." †

"COINING BRAINS": "TRYING EXIGENCIES": "INEXPLICABLE SILENCE"

These three comments, their persons and dates are sufficient cues for the reader's own annotations of the following five letters ‡ to J. M. Hill, written by my father, from the Alpine, New York, doubtless in late August and early September of that year. Between letters (3) and (4), and between (4) and (5), he appears to have had a personal interview with Hill on the matters in question:

(1)—"Dear Hill—Ever since the Standard closed, I have kept as incessantly at work as the dangerous illness of last three weeks would permit. Under the circumstances I am surprised at what I have accomplished. . . . I have completed an entirely new version of Money Mad. I have written an elaborate scenario of The Mocker—but, as I became convinced that the rugged light and shade of the story would seem more real in Russia, I have entirely rewritten the scenario with many new situations, and a far better treatment—calling the play, for the present, The Vakoffs.—Lastly, I have completed the plotting of my novel of Money Mad—and determined the title and treatment of every book and chapter.

"I have endeavoured to see you many times, and failed.-When I have been so fortunate as to catch you, it has not seemed convenient for you to appoint any time; and, feeling that you were absorbed with many cares. I have felt sensitive and unwilling to thrust my work upon you.

^{*} June 16, '90, quoted on page ii, 248. † Cf. his letters on pages ii, 239, 240. ‡ The originals of these letters (undated) are copies, in my father's own script, made by him on rough manila paper, for reference.

- —The time has come, however, when I can go no further without orders from you.—Will you, therefore, please appoint a time and place, where we can escape intrusion for an hour, so that you may hear the new scenarios and I may know without delay which work you wish me to complete first? . . . Regretting the necessity of adding one iota to the many business botherations before you,—I remain, Faithfully yours."
- (2)—"I have endeavoured not to trouble you unnecessarily. If I now press you to grant me a reply to my last letter, it is only because the very trying exigencies of my life compel me to do so. I placed myself with absolute trust in your hands, with no desire to bind or hamper you in any way. . . . I do not desire to bore or annoy you now; but with the many lives that look to mine for their support—I am forced, much against my will, to ask you to grant me a few moments of your time, that I may know how to proceed in the work which I have agreed, and striven so long to do to your satisfaction.—Sincerely yours."
- (3)—"My dear Mr. Hill—Your long silence is incomprehensible. I have always supposed that the humblest of your associates could count upon the consideration prompted by good breeding and fair business.— How am I to construe your failure to keep the promises you have made, both to write to me, and to pay me what you owe, and I so painfully need? . . . If I receive no reply to this reminder of your promises to me, I shall be forced, much to my regret, to believe that you possess neither the instincts of a gentleman, nor those of an honourable business man.—When it is so easy to prove your possession of both, it is difficult to fancy any fair excuse for your failure to do so.—Respectfully."

"SOLE RIGHT TO ALL MY WORK, TIME AND ABILITIES"

(4)—"Since we parted yesterday, the more I reflect on our conversation the more puzzled I become. Several months ago,* I entered into an agreement with you, by which I was to place all my time and abilities at your disposal for the writing, and staging of plays, and the writing and publication of novels.—You were to have the sole right to all my work. You were to pay me, for this, One Hundred and Twenty-Five Dollars each week, and give me a share (to be determined later) in such net profits as should accrue from the production of my plays, or the publication of my novels.—This understanding was made in general terms † to the above mentioned effect. . . . Now, from the day this arrangement was concluded, I have been eager to get at new workplays, or novels, which would afford me a prospect of making something more than a mere living salary, for my family, out of the employment of my time. It was for my interest to do this, but you won my confidence and my affection; so, when it became evident that you desired me to do work from which there could be no future return to me, I did not complain nor hesitate.

"You had often said to me and my friends that, if I would only let

^{*} Feb. 12, 1890. Cf. his letter, of that date, on page ii, 239. † For these terms there appears to have been no written contract.

you guide me, you would coin my brains, and make me rich.—I believed you, never doubting that my life, my abilities, and my future, were perfectly safe from disappointment, or desertion, if left trustingly in your hands.—Your own words have borne testimony to the willingness, the alacrity and, as you have been kind enough to add—the ability, with which I have always responded to your directions and your desires.—Never, until yesterday, did you ever express any hint of dissatisfaction with our arrangement, nor of any desire to end it. On the contrary, you have heard a portion of my work—have taken away with you another portion—and have promised to let me know, from day to day, which work you wished me to complete first. . . . For weeks, I have written to you, seeking the direction it was your function, and duty, to extend to me.—What reason, then, can you give me for supposing that I imagined or believed that our arrangement at any time had ended?

"Against my own interests I obeyed your call in The Pemberton affair, giving time I ought to have given to creating work in which I myself had an interest, to doing what I could to bring success to another man's work."—Again, by your directing, I devoted my time † to the staging and improving of Money Mad, a play in which, although I was the author, you knew well that you had never given me the right to expect a share. . . . To my positive damage in reputation, pocket, and health, I went into the cast of Money Mad, devoting my vitality to the endeavour to save you money, and help build up the play in which you, not I, was interested.—Although all this expenditure of time, on my part, was done solely in your interests, without any hope of future reward to me, I gladly made it, hoping you would appreciate it as an evidence of my sincere devotion to you.

"DIRE NECESSITIES": "SURRENDER MYSELF TRUSTFULLY"

"At last, when for the first time I am free to get at the work which is really for my advantage to undertake under our arrangement,—then these weeks, devoted to an interest that is a common one (not alone yours), you now suddenly undertake to repudiate. How could I imagine from your warm protestations of friendship—your hearty expressions of confidence in my ability, and your earnest admonitions to me to surrender myself trustfully to your management,—how, I ask you, could I for an instant suppose that you would take the surprising stand in this matter which you did, Tuesday?

"The time has come when the dire necessities of others—to say nothing of my own—force me to submit my case, and my claims to you. . . . I believe that our arrangement has not yet ended—as you have never yet definitely freed me from the obligations to you which I assumed, a few months ago.—I believe that six weeks' salary is already due me under our arrangement. . . . As my extremity is very great, I beg of you a prompt response to my needs—with a clear statement of your understanding concerning our future relations, and your wishes regarding my work.—Faithfully yours."

† Cf. footnote on page ii, 247.

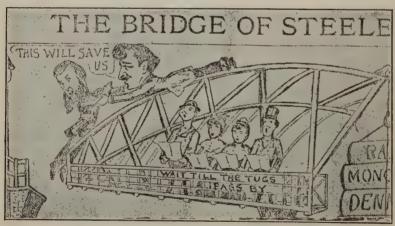
^{*} The work of Henry Guy Carleton. Cf. footnote on page ii, 239.

"I CANNOT SEE WHAT YOU HAVE TO SELL TO ANY ONE"

(5) "Since our last interview, in which you informed me of your intention to sell Money Mad outright,—I have been considering carefully our contract, and feel that I am bound to enforce it to the letter, in order to protect not alone my own interests, but those that I hold in trust. In deference to this duty, I have now to inform you that your failure to keep your agreements, under our contract, has broken and annulled said contract. Our former agreement, therefore, has ceased to have any legal existence—and I cannot see what you have to sell to any one.

"I made a contract with you—a large part of the consideration for the use of the play being the determination you then expressed to run Money Mad as long as possible with the strongest company obtainable. Much to my surprise, though I had made you concessions on the royalty for several weeks, the royalties were not promptly paid. I did not desire to put any painful pressure upon you. Several times I have written you without response; still I have not lost patience. But I cannot risk having the play shelved at any one's convenience, or caprice; nor permit any one to play it without prompt payment of the royalties.

"I have been looking into the chances of Money Mad, and realise that I shall have no difficulty in securing a much larger return for the play from others than I have asked or should ask you to pay. The time has come, however, when your own manner of conducting your business with me has made it imperative for me to call a halt, until a new contract has been entered into between us." *



From a contemporary cartoon of Hill and MacKaye,

HILL'S "GLORIOUS" FIGHT "IN INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN AUTHOR"

Of course for his "new contract" MacKaye might whistle to the wind; for Manager J. M. Hill was a great theatrical humourist. Possibly he realised that not merely his individual tactics toward

^{*}The terms suggested for a new contract are given in the rest of this letter, too long for inclusion here.

an indigent author, whose play was making him a fortune, were money-maddening; but likewise that the whole cosmos of the theatre's economics was madder than a million March-hares. For within about a week of the receipt of the above letter, Hill launched "his" forty-weeks' season of Money Mad, by issuing, through his own publicity office this "glorious" auto-panegyric:

"During Manager J. M. Hill's eighteen years' experience in a theatrical way, he has fought the American public with the American drama in the interest of the American author. He has proven that genius selects no locality in choosing its representatives; that in America we can produce in a dramatic and literary way that which is equal to anything from the other side of the water. . . . In his production of 'Money Mad,' Mr. Hill has achieved for his author, Steele Mac-Kaye, a more glorious success than has fallen to the lot of any other dramatist."

"BAKE A PUDDIN', BAKE A PIE"-"YOU MAY BE LOST, BUT NOT I"

Though the author of Money Mad was not himself a humourist, yet in this juncture of "glorious success," his sides must have twinged with that sardonic Destiny which linked him "in a theatrical way" of genius, with Manager Hill, as a fellow-member of the only defensive alliance then existent in the theatre—"the Managers' Protective Association"!

> "Bake a puddin', bake a pie, Send it up to Steele MacKaye: Steele MacKaye is no in, Send it up to the Man i' the Mune!" †

So once more the sly, reiterating pixies pulled the hem of his ancestral plaidie, in their eerie, mocking laughter. But once more, where he sat—at his midnight desk in the lonely Alpine—MacAoidh na Ranna, the old seer of Rhinns, "visited him in waking slumber," bringing his deathless volume, in which was written: "You may be lost, but not I!"

And there, in his "peace of radiant poise," his Spirit stood beside Steele MacKave, who reached for a scrap of rough manila paper ‡ (discovered thirty years later, crumpled amid his "lost manuscripts"), and scratched there with a dull pencil these illuminate words § :--

^{*} Paterson, N. J. Labor Standard, Sept. 13, 1890.

[†] Cf. on pages i, 7 and i, 8, the old Scotch legend and ballad. ‡ On sheets of this same manilla paper he drafted the foregoing letters to J. M. Hill. § Cf. his words (April 12, 1890) on page ii, 247: "How I wish I were free

to give my time and strength to seeking and formulating truth, instead of living this slave's life," etc.

"Philosophy,
Supreme Revealer of that high Estate of Truth
Where Law Eternal flows from Love that ever lasts!

"Philosophy, Gentle Messenger of that Peace whose radiant poise Flowers from the far-reaching roots of conscious Right!

"Philosophy,
Serene Inspirer of supernal Passion
That—undefiled by Fear, and led by Love—
Passes in gladness through the veils of horror
That drape the gates of Death!

"Philosophy!—
To thy Holy Spirit I dedicate my will:
Lead me!—and let thy chaste and dear desire
Determine all my actions to an end Divine!"

CHAPTER XXVI

PHILOSOPHY AND THE MOUNTAINS

New York, Shirley, Washington, N. Carolina, &c.

Sept., 1890—July, 1891

SEER AND SOLDIER-NIGHT WATCHES; BEAUTY AND TRAVESTY

In this visionary hour, steele mackage now stood, on one of the major summits of his life—at once a peak of potential action (with a solid pyramid of accumulated labours beneath his feet) and a crossroads of thought on the ethereal skylines of his spirit.

Always, throughout the battling turmoil of his life as an artist, he preserved apart—chiefly for the night watches—a tent of serenity and silence, dedicated to the intense concentrations of his life as a philosopher. A vivid symbol of that creative ideal, embracing both seer and soldier in one measure of manhood, is dazzlingly etched by Plato in a stark vista of Socrates—revealed as by lightning flashes, against the dark plains of Marathon—standing before his tent, all night long, in the suspense of silence between the wild day-battles against invading hordes—standing there mute, still as an image—thinking.

As a child, I supposed that every father of a family had an ebony-black chiffonier, its shelves crammed with manuscripts and mysterious charts, locked away from the hands of small boys and the feather dusters of servants; a sort of forbidden "Pantry" of Philosophy, as much a regular part of the household regimen as the equally sacrosanct—but more often pilfered—Pantry of Cookies in the kitchen. Such a chiffonier was kept in my father's study, where often, on early mornings, before my start for school, I would peek between the folding doors and see my father, seated, or standing beside a still unextinguished gas-jet—silent—unmoving—his eyes rivetted in thought.

Thirteen years before his Money Mad experience,* chafing under disillusionments of the commercialised theatre, he had turned to the beckoning sanctum of Philosophy and started his second School of Expression at 23 Union Square (1877), giving focus and new impetus to the young movement he had launched six years earlier at Boston and Harvard. Again, in 1884,† "back from the Elba" of his frustrating Madison Square contract, "building anew with

^{*} Cf. page i, 266.

[†] Cf. page i, 462.

men," he had founded on practical phases of his Philosophy his third school—the Theatre-School of his Lyceum Theatre—still functioning to-day as the American Academy of Dramatic Arts.*

Meantime, however, during the two decades since his initial Harvard lecture, the name of Delsarte—which he had self-abnegatingly attached to these practical phases of æsthetic art he himself had originated and perfected—had itself become commercialised and travestied by the distorted and ludicrous perversions of ignorance or half-knowledge. Through such caricatures, perpetrated by the venal, the absurd, or the vain, the noble austerity of a pure science and its disciplined embodiment in art had become a laughing stock of the vulgar and a source of vexatious sorrow to the few informed, who were aware of those gracious lineaments of Beauty which the mob had defaced beyond all recognition.

DELSARTE CARICATURES



Cartoon of MacKaye repudiating travesties of "Delsarte"

Journals and advertisements thrived on the distorted cult, like a quack medicine. Through the "ad" columns, "The Delsarte Corset" vied with "The Delsarte Garter," in bargain reductions for "reducing" ladies of superavoirdupois. The "harmonic" design of "The Delsarte Adjustable Limb" vaunted its superior up-to-dateness over the antique pattern of Peter Stuyvesant's wooden leg.-To my father, of course, such horrors of flesh and wax-work were peculiarly anathema. Many a time he may well have said to himself-as twentyfive years later, Isadora Dun-

can † exclaimed, in contemplating the same continent gone awry with travesties of the noble rhythmic art of the Dance: "And I set all this going! What fitting penance shall be mine in eternal Purgatory?"

^{*} Cf. Appendix.

[†] In a letter, Gordon Craig once wrote me that, in his opinion, a bust of Delsarte should have a niche of honour in the temple of the Dance as expressed by Isadora Duncan. Since Delsarte's teachings were chiefly vocal,

MACKAYE'S MAGNUM OPUS IN NINE VOLUMES: 300 CHARTS, 3000 ILLUSTRATIONS

Turning away from such travesties, as well as from the "money-maddening" facts of his contract with J. M. Hill, Steele MacKaye conceived now the half desperate hope of achieving immaterial vision and material fortune at a single stroke, by completing once for all the unfinished labours of twenty years, "in a manner that will rebuke those who have brought ridicule upon a great man—and a great science."

With this end in view, he wrote the two following letters, addressed to a New York publisher, the editor of Werner's Voice Magazine. Both are dated from "The Alpine, 33rd St. & Broadway": the first, on Sept. 15th, the second on Sept 20th, 1890:

(1)—"Mr. Edgar S. Werner,—Dear Sir: I am about to commence the publication of the following volumes:—

I: DELSARTE'S WORK,

As Revealed by His Own Manuscripts.

II: DELSARTE AND DELSARTISM.

III: Science of Expression in Nature.

IV: PHILOSOPHY OF EXPRESSION IN ART.

V: HARMONIC EXPRESSION.

VI: EVOLUTION OF THE HARMONIC MAN.

VII: HARMONIC GYMNASTICS.

Vol. 1st.—Formative course—for Beginners.

Vol. 2nd.—Co-operative course—for Advanced Students. (These volumes are prepared for practical use in the Schools.)

VIII: PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF STAGE ART.

"These works will be complete in nine volumes, and will contain charts, and illustrations, of the most novel and fascinating character. They will treat, thoroughly, the most important subject of modern thought,—and in a manner that will rebuke those who have brought ridicule upon a great man and a great science. . . . Some years ago you requested me to inform you when I was ready to begin the publication of the work, to which I have devoted the greater portion of my life. In deference to your desire, I now send you these lines.

"The preparation of these volumes implies the devotion of a lifetime. Naturally, therefore, I desire to secure the largest compensation, possible, for the exhausting labour of years. The question I have now

not visual, and since the visual gamuts of bodily and facial expression—Harmonic Gymnastics—which have long gone under the name of Delsartism—were (as this chapter reveals) originated and formulated by Steele MacKaye, who taught them for twenty years, it would appear that a niche of honour for another image, as well, would have its appropriate place in that temple of the Dance.

to decide, is to whom I shall entrust these volumes for publication. Will it prove more profitable to surrender them to a publishing house accustomed to issuing, and exploiting, scientific and school books—or relinquish them to you who have given special attention to the publication of works upon the subject of expression? . . . The course most likely to requite me liberally, and yield the largest sum, in the future, to my family, is the one it is my duty to adopt.—I pray you, therefore, to inform me, fully, as to what you are willing to pay, to secure the sole right to these works, for the world,—and what facilities you command for pushing them, and for making them yield the utmost profit, to us both.—Sincerely yours—Steele MacKaye."

(2)—"Mr. Edgar S. Werner,—Dear Sir: I have collected, and arranged for publication, an immense mass of data, notes, etc., pertaining to the subjects, the titles of which I have already sent to you.—I have laid out, and determined, the whole method of treatment to be employed in the presentation of this work to the public.—I have worked out, and completed, many of the most important Charts, illustrative of the Science of Expression.—Years of the most conscientious labour have enabled me to prepare this vast, weighty subject, for immediate publication, as far as the text itself is concerned.—Illustrations depicting those actions of the human body which are distinctly expressive of different orders and species of emotion and character, are, as yet, very incomplete, and must remain so, until I am in a position to employ a competent artist to complete them, under my own personal direction.

"In order to secure the means, and leisure, to fittingly complete the great task which has already cost me so much, in time and vitality, I am willing to sell a one half interest in the whole work—consisting of nine volumes—for Ten Thousand Dollars. I will pay my half of the expense of illustrating, publishing, and selling these books, the purchaser of the other half-interest to bank, at the same time as I do, his share of the expenses of our common enterprise.—I make this sale of a one half interest upon these terms, only because by so doing I can secure the opportunity to devote all my energies to the speediest publication of this work, and at the same time obtain the means to provide engravings of over 100 Charts,—and over 3000 new, original, and striking illustrations of the Science of Human Nature, and its Expression, in Life and in Art.

"Each of these volumes will be furnished with Charts, as well as with Drawings of the human body, portraying the actions, referred to by the text, in such a manner as to make the truth and practical value of the Philosophy of Harmonic Development more easily apparent to an untutored mind. If we come to terms, I will abandon all other work, and devote myself wholly to the earliest possible completion of these volumes.—Within thirty days of the signing of any agreement between us, I can, and will, give you the whole of the text of the first book entitled: 'Delsarte's Work, As Revealed by his Own Manuscripts.'—Each of the other books can be issued in rapid succession, and I will guarantee that each book will be so constructed, and written, that it will excite an in-

tense interest in the book that is to succeed it.—If this offer is agreeable to you, the direction of the business affairs, connected with the publication of this work, will be left in your hands, while the conduct of the artistic side of the enterprise will remain in mine. Please let me know without delay whether you desire to purchase the one half interest I offer, or not, and oblige—Yours very sincerely,—Steele MacKaye."

This magnum opus in nine volumes was never completed and no parts of it were ever published.

HIS NOTES PIRATED AND PUBLISHED; CRUDITIES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

What answer was received in reply to the above letters is unknown to me, but it was doubtless not in the affirmative. This might, indeed, have been obvious to my father, had he given sufficient thought to it, for the publication of so monumental a work, of such a nature, would probably not have commanded the specified terms from a publisher at that time, as several volumes of wholly unauthorised notes, taken from my father's lessons, by private pupils of his, had already begun to appear in published form, without his knowledge or approval.

In all cases, my father's private lessons were taught to his pupils, upon express agreement by them that the notes taken should not be given publication; yet numerous volumes of such notes, often garbled, crude and misconceived, are even yet in circulation, some without any mention whatever of Steele MacKaye, others with printed statements appearing to indicate that the contents have been authorised by him. One such book in particular, comprising 500 voluminous pages, based upon notes pirated from my father, with no acknowledgment to him as their source, has enjoyed a very wide sale, in schools and elsewhere, during thirty years, and is still in the book market.

Concerning these matters the biographer possesses a quantity of data, much of it unneedful to chronicle after so many years. Yet, in responsibility to the truth and purpose of this memoir, it is appropriate to record at this point a few documentary facts which clarify this significant phase of Steele MacKaye's life and his creative contribution to an educational movement which has, in its time, influenced great numbers of people.—Before passing, therefore to the immediate outcome of his crisis in September, 1890, I will focus here a few illuminating statements concerning Delsarte and Steele MacKaye's own relation to so-called "Delsartism," which were made by my father about two years later, in hurried moments

snatched from an overwhelming pressure of time and duties, involved in his last colossal undertaking, the Spectatorium.

During that interval of two years,* there arose an ever increasing confusion of tongues, obscuring or misrepresenting my father's relation to the movement he had initiated; so that my mother—with the view of clarifying the situation—at first urged him to make some written public statement himself. Soon realising, however, that he was then too distraught with other cares, she undertook herself to write an article, in the form of a letter to Werner's Voice Magazine, embodying therein my father's ideas. This she did, sending (in April, '92) to my father her own first draft, which he returned to her with his personal revisions.—These matters are referred to in the following extracts from four letters, written by my father from Chicago to my mother, in Shirley, Mass.:

"HARMONIC GYMNASTICS ARE ABSOLUTELY MY OWN ALONE"

- (1) —"Jan. 26, '92:—Dear Heart: As usual I have only a moment. Write Werner that he has been misinformed regarding the preparation of a work on Delsarte's methods by yourself. Write him that Mr. Mac-Kaye is the only one who has any real right to speak for the dead master, and that he will do so when the charlatans that deceitfully use his name, and abuse his reputation, have exhausted the misrepresentations which they utter so easily, and which secure so thoroughly the contempt of genuine scientific students. In a word, make him understand, if possible, that when I am ready, I will speak, and that meantime no one will speak for me."
- (2)—"March 30, '92:—I am too tired to answer your letter, as it should be answered, concerning the Delsarte business. I can never think of that noble name now, without a feeling of indignation that only makes me ill."
- (3)—"April 11, '92:—I enclose your thoughtful page, with the questions answered. In relation to Harmonic—or, as I first called them, Esthetic Gymnastics,—they are, in philosophy as well as in form, absolutely my own alone, though founded, in part, upon some of the principles formulated by Delsarte.—In the beginning of my teaching I never dreamed of separating my work from his, for it was done in the same spirit as his, and I cared not for the letter, nor the fame.—It is only now, when others are teaching so much nonsense in his name, and basing it upon the truths stolen from me, that I am forced to do this. It is not

^{*} July 10, 1891, on the eve of sailing for London, my father wrote to my mother: "I am eager to get to work, with May Monroe's help, and get out a book that will properly rebuke the charlatans and thieves who have so long traded upon the name which my labours have given Delsarte in this country." Again he wrote to her from London, Sept. 18, '91, at the first inception of the Spectatorium plan: "If this plan I am working on fails, I will settle down with you and the children and devote the rest of my life to writing my philosophy."

done to detract from the desert of Delsarte, but to defend us both from the frauds who trade upon and obscure—by an irrational and sentimental presentation of incontrovertible truths—our philosophy as well as our names."

"TIME ALONE CAN TEST THE PHILOSOPHY OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TRAINING OF WHICH I AM THE FOUNDER"

(4)—"May 12, '92:—I return you the Mss. of the letter concerning Delsarte, typewritten. Anything which it might be difficult to verify I have left out. I have endeavoured to emphasise certain points, and I trust you will not modify or weaken this emphasis. . . . I have despised all the various lies and misrepresentations too much to notice them. If at last we are to pay any attention to them, we can with perfect dignity, and without resentment or malice ourselves, hint our own estimate of the dishonourable character of the plagiarisms from me, and the ignorant character of the answering attacks upon me. If the work I have done, while giving Delsarte the credit for it, is going to lose any of its hold upon the mind of any student because it is finally divorced from Delsarte's name,—so let it be. Those who judge and accept a work for its real intrinsic value will hold my work precious, no matter who may have the credit of gifting the world with it; and, as for the others, in the long run they are of no consequence.

"Time, and time alone, can test the eternal quality of the philosophy of physical and mental training of which I am the founder. I shall do my work as well as the circumstance of God permits, and concern myself no further regarding its reception by the world.—I trust Mr. Alger will approve of your letter,* and support it by his own testimony so far as it relates to his connection with me in the matter.—If he is surprised now to find that much which he supposed was Delsarte's is really mine † that will not affect his perception, or appreciation, of the precious value of its truth; for his is not one of those petty minds that esteem any presentation of truth or beauty merely because it bears a name well known.

"If Delsarte's name is well known, it is because I made it so—and did this by the formulation of his own teachings in a manner more lucid to the mass than his own formulations, and besides this, contributed that practical philosophy of perfection for the individual which has most strongly impressed and seized upon the minds and hearts of the studious. That I sought no credit for this myself should not secure me the censure of the just, and therefore will not be misunderstood, or condemned, by a mind as noble as Mr. Alger's.—But enough of this. I am too weary with the enormous work of the moment to worry myself with the manner in which my unselfish surrender of my own ideas to another may be received by the world in general. All my real friends will know how to estimate my acts. For the others, I care as little as I do for the buzz of an insect on the mountains of the moon."

^{*}I.e., the letter to Werner's Voice Magazine, signed by Mrs. Steele MacKaye and published July, 1892. Cf. page ii, 272. (Wm. R. Alger approved it whole-heartedly. I possess a letter from him to that effect.) † Cf. important footnote on page i, 224.

The statement concerning Delsarte which my mother had written for publication, having thus received my father's careful revisions and approval, was sent by her to Werner's Voice Magazine, in which it appeared as the leading article in the issue of July, 1892, under the caption: "Steele Mackaye and François Delsarte: A Letter Outlining Their Personal and Professional Relations." It was signed at the end, "Mrs. Steele Mackaye." Cf. Appendix.

It contained the first and only authorised statement ever published concerning the true origin of the so-called "Delsarte System," which—as an educational movement—had grown, through twenty years, to far-reaching magnitude, with no knowledge that its real founder was not Delsarte but MacKaye, who from the beginning had "had no desire to claim any special credit" for his own discoveries and formulations which comprised the foundation of "the System."

"DELSARTE NEVER TAUGHT GYMNASTICS: THE SO-CALLED 'DELSARTE SYSTEM' IS ENTIRELY MACKAYE'S INVENTION"

After giving an account of Steele MacKaye's first meeting with Delsarte and of his first lectures in Boston, this article by my mother proceeds:

"Mme. Geraldy, the daughter of François Delsarte, has expressed great surprise in finding that 'gymnastics' are taught as a part of her father's 'system,' and she has declared that Delsarte never taught them and knew nothing of them. There was also lately published in the Boston Journal a very interesting interview with M. Alfred Giraudet, a distinguished pupil of Delsarte who now occupies an important chair in the National Conservatory of Paris. In the course of the conversation this question was asked the professor:

"'Did not Delsarte apply gymnastics to voice-culture and declamation?'

"'No; not at all, as far as I know,' replied M. Giraudet. 'With the exception of two or three exercises for the development of suppleness of the arms, Delsarte paid no attention to gymnastics in general.'

"Both Mme. Geraldy and M. Giraudet are entirely right. Delsarte never taught gymnastics. The whole system of esthetic or harmonic gymnastics is, from the first word to the last, entirely of Mr. MacKaye's invention. . . . During his study with Delsarte, Mr. MacKaye taught something of his own system of mento-muscular movements to one of his fellow-students, applying his own principles and exercises with a result which aroused Delsarte's delighted enthusiasm. . . . In his first lectures, Mr. MacKaye never dreamed of separately cataloguing his own discoveries or inventions. For this he has often since been blamed. But such of Mr. MacKaye's discoveries as he was able to show Del-

sarte were gladly accepted by him, as supplementing and developing the practical side of his own work. As they had thus become a recognized portion of the methods of the new science Mr. MacKaye was so eager to introduce, and as he had no desire to claim any special credit for the discovery and formulation of such truths as had been first revealed to himself, he made no attempt to separate his own contributions from the body of Delsarte's work.

"But Mr. MacKaye has now been working and studying for 20 years.* and during that time he has been constantly developing the Science and the Philosophy of Expression; at the same time building up and perfecting that system of psycho-physical training which to-day, under the name of Aesthetic or Harmonic Gymnastics, forms so large a portion of the practical training of the 'Delsarte System,' as it is taught in classes and in schools, and set forth in the various text-books † now published on this subject. . . . Whenever Mr. MacKaye is permitted a respite from his pressing duties, he gladly avails himself of it to push forward this love-work of his life, and, in due time, the book will be completed, in which he will endeavour to demonstrate clearly the nature and value of Delsarte's contributions to the Science and Philosophy of Expression, and thus worthily present the cause of which he is to-day the chief and most responsible representative. This book will be followed by the publication of the work containing Mr. MacKaye's own distinct contributions to the same science and philosophy. When these works are published they will emphatically settle the questions that have arisen concerning the distinction between the work of the master and that of his disciple. The relative value of their labours in the same field will then become apparent. . . .

"ALL PUBLICATIONS CONTAINING MACKAYE'S NOTES ARE UNAUTHORISED"

"His reasons for not publishing his notes on Harmonic Gymnastics are as follows: These notes are useful only as reminders, to the pupil, of the exercises which have been given previously by the teacher, and which have already been done by the pupil under the teacher's eye. As reminders, therefore, they are most valuable, but as directions to be followed from a written page and without a competent guide, they are of little benefit, as the subtilties of movement are the distinguishing characteristics of these exercises. . . . So he has preferred to keep his notes in manuscript, until such time as he was prepared to present them in a completed and permanent form, for the use of well-trained teachers.—Many of Mr. MacKaye's notes, however, have been published far and wide, without his knowledge or consent, and the books containing them are fast increasing in number. . . . As these notes were not arranged for publication, and as these exercises were always given to meet the special requirements of the pupil, it follows that only in rare cases,

^{*} As the records of this biography have now, for the first time, revealed, the beginnings of these studies date back to at least eight years before MacKaye met Delsarte. Cf. page i, 91.

[†] These text-books, as this chapter records, were all based (usually without any acknowledgment) on their only source—the lectures or private lessons of Steele MacKaye.

even in the direct copies from his manuscript, is there given an arrangement of the exercises of which Mr. MacKaye could approve; while, in the perversions and exaggerations so frequently met with, the

true meaning and value of the exercises are wholly lost. . . .

"One of the most important principles underlying the system of Harmonic Gymnastics is that of relaxation. This principle was discovered by Mr. MacKaye alone. When used in its own realm, for its own purpose, it possesses a value and significance hardly to be overestimated; but, like all of most value, it is capable of most serious abuse. Relaxation is simply a means to an end. This would seem apparent enough on its face; but this principle is often made almost an end in itself by a class of teachers who have so exaggerated this portion of the training, that they might appropriately be called 'Relaxationists.' Many relaxing exercises set down in print, and recommended by them, are not only useless, from any artistic or sanitary point of view, but are absolutely dangerous to health. . . . In regard also to the principle of Poise-which is another of Mr. MacKaye's discoveries-many of the exercises are abused and misunderstood to an extent which often robs them of every feature of grace and beauty, and therefore of any usefulness. . . . In view of such facts, it is, perhaps, well to repeat: that one and all of the publications which contain Mr. MacKaye's notes have been used without either his authorisation or knowledge, and, therefore, he can never be held responsible either for the ridicule they bring upon the cause, or for the injury they may do to the individual. (Signed) MRS. STEELE MACKAYE."

Because of my father's death, soon after the publication of this letter, the truths therein made clear for the first time were given little circulation beyond the radius of Werner's Voice Magazine, and have never been publicly reiterated—nor further clarified by fresh evidence—until the publication of this memoir.

"MACKAYE'S CAREER A HISTORY OF THE ÆSTHETICS OF 'ELOCUTION'"

Yet some partial recognition of these truths was tardily expressed in published statements soon after my father's death. In an editorial, Dec., 1894, Werner's Magazine wrote:

"A history of the professional career of James Steele MacKaye would be a history of the development of the asthetics of 'elocution.'* Whether one be a Delsartian or not, he must acknowledge that great and radical changes have taken place in the teaching and exemplifying of this art. Its mechanics are less mechanical, and the individual takes precedence over the method to a greater extent than ever before. A large part of the credit for this belongs to Mr. MacKaye, who, in in-

^{*} By consulting the Index of this memoir, under Delsarte and Lectures, as well as under allied data in the Index, the reader may gather a bird's-eye-view of that "history of the development of the æsthetics of 'elocution.'"

troducing Delsartism into America, made a lasting contribution to the art of emotional expression. . . . A series of his lectures on 'Expression in Nature and Expression in Art,' reported in a magazine in 1887, show him to brilliant advantage on the rostrum."

In the same magazine, March, 1894, Nym Crinkle wrote: "Steele MacKaye was seen at his best among his peers, undisturbed by the exigencies of the playhouse. No one has at all equalled him in his extemporaneous lectures to art students; and very few men of his time anywhere had so compactly formulated the fundamental principles of the philosophy of art.—His best work was unknown to the world, and had it not been abandoned for the theatre, would have given him an eminent place in the field of æsthetic philosophy."

TRUTH CONTEMPORANEOUS—NOT TOO LATE "TO BE ENSHRINED IMMORTALLY"

Glancing backward, the record of this entire memoir reveals a nature, the largess of whose generous impulses and impersonal aims scattered in his wake innumerable creative influences few of which ever bore his name. Perhaps in no instance, however, was this more conspicuously the case than in his altogether selfless rendering over to Delsarte of those high imaginative gifts and patient labours of his own by which the name and fame of Delsarte were not only (in Madame Delsarte's words) "rescued from oblivion," * but were given by him an impetus toward "immortality" which, despite the vagaries of public remembrance, bids fair to become permanent in the history of æsthetics and education.

If this memoir, however, shall attain the goal of its seeking, the glowing image of Steele MacKaye will no longer be obscured by the shadowing wings of his own high renunciation, but will shine in companioning radiance with the genius of that French maître whom his devoted American disciple outmastered by the larger scope and fecundity of his creative powers. For though, by the lessening span of journalistic memory, the present may appear "too late a date" to obtain that goal, yet by the ever enlarging measure of human history, essential truth is always contemporaneous; and, so long as the truths of spiritual beauty and heroism remain humanly essential, so long will the true relationship of these two artists and heroic men have permanent meanings for our race.

As the scope of this work permits of no further mention of this

^{*}Cf. excerpt from Mme. Delsarte's letter on page i, 177, and footnote on same page. Also statement of Joseph I. C. Clarke, on page i, 157: "From that April (1871) night of his lecture in Steinway Hall, the name of Delsarte advanced quickly to be a synonym of art expression, the country over." Cf. also the illuminating statement by Ruth St. Denis, in Appendix ii, 275.

deeply significant phase of my father's influence, I can ring down the curtain of its strange drama with no more fitting finale, than by quoting here this letter, written to me by an author * of distinguished eloquence and prolific thought—himself my father's first pupil and ever loyal friend, dated thirty-three years after their first meeting—from his home, "6 Brimmer St., Boston, Oct. 20th, 1904,"—ten years after my father's death:

"My dear Percy—My indebtedness to your father, for introduction and initiation in the philosophy of human nature and the science and art of training nature toward its ideal perfection, is immense. I recall now with emotions of delight and admiration the transforming enthusiasm he aroused in me. . . The work your father did in introducing the Delsarte Ideal into America is, in my opinion, of such inestimable value, that his memory has a claim to be recognised with admiring gratitude by the whole American people, and to be enshrined immortally among the names of their greatest benefactors.—Your true friend—Wm. R. Alger."

In September, 1890, Steele MacKaye was at last ready to devote all his energies to his monumental life-work in this field, "for immediate publication, as far as the text is concerned," and to deliver the first volume within a month—had the needful means been forthcoming. The means, however, was not forthcoming. So, pursued again by furies of poverty, he turned his face to another fork of the crossroads, where his path was to lead—through tortuous passes to death—toward the realisation of a mightier magnum opus, in the art of the theatre.

FERVID FINANCIERING: ICARUS AND COL. SELLARS BOOM SIOUX CITY

At the moment,† in revulsion, he was caught up in a fervid whirlwind of financiering—a flight of despairing optimism, wherein *Icarus* lent his scorched wings to *Col. Sellars* in a "golden" hyperbole of hope, which is thus recorded in an item of the St. Paul, Minn., Globe (Aug. 27, 1890):

"Is Steele MacKaye going money-mad? Everybody who knows him, says a New York paper, is talking about his new departure as announced by an advertisement, headed: 'Golden opportunities to be found in a new and prolific field, where careful investors can place their money'—

^{*}A partial list of the works of Rev. William Rounseville Alger is given on page i, 138.

[†] In Lippincott's Magazine, October, 1890, was published a "Round Robin Talk," whose chief participants were Steele MacKaye, Berry Wall, Edward Harrigan and J. M. Stoddart.

to wit, in South Dakota—and concluding: 'Parties in New York desiring information will please call upon, or address Mr. Steele MacKaye,' etc.

... Surely this could never be Steele MacKaye—the playwright, raconteur, diner-out, actor, manager, philosopher—for what should he know about land booms in South Dakota? . . . Yet verily it is the man himself! MacKaye acknowledges it, and says: 'A millionaire, whom I have long numbered among my friends, and who says he has long wanted to see me a millionaire, has at last made me an opportunity, and persauded me to improve it.—I have in my hands a large block of lots in one of Dakota's most wonderful cities, and I am giving personal attention to it.'"

A copy of this New York item, marked "J. P. B. in 'Gossip,'" was sent to MacKaye (Aug. 30, '90), by John Paul Bocock, journalist, with this jingle in Bocock's handwriting:

"My dear MacKaye,
As time rolls by
Methinks I see what was your bent,
One winter's night
When of 'delight'
You discoursed, and 'development'!

"Having developed old Delsarte
The ideal and the dramatic art,
You're realising now a quota
Of 'pay dirt'!—Right,
Old boy! 'Delight'
In such 'developments,'—Dakota!"

SENATOR JONES OF NEVADA; "PLUNGING" FROM DAKOTAS TO CAROLINAS

The millionaire friend, mentioned in the above item, was Senator Jones of Nevada who, two years before, had given the resplendent banquet in honour of the author of *Paul Kauvar*, at Washington. The "large block of lots" was situated in Sioux City, South Dakota.

So—to fill the hungry beaks of a cottageful of fledgling philosophers at Shirley Common—the foraging pater familias now turned from speculation on the "heavenly alchemy" of Philosophy to speculation in the real estate of a City less Celestial, yet beaming no less golden and sanguine with aurora-boreal lights from the far Northwest. And still, to this day, that "block of lots" reposes in the dust of our Shirley attic, the haunt of speculative spiders, weaving their filmy chains; while far away, on autumn midnights, high over the sky-scrapers of Sioux City, the aurora borealis still beckons and beams—and bursts!

But the millionaire good-fellowship of Senator Jones did not

cease at giving his "prince-and-pauper" friend this opportunity to draw "pay dirt" from the roiling junction of the Sioux and Missouri rivers, with a "block of lots" for a sieve-pan. The Senator's royal Americanism spread large over the map, from rivers of Dakota to mountains of the Carolinas and Georgia, "plunging" from the aurora borealis into the bowels of the continent.

In many-coloured soils the Senator had his feudal retainers. Well I remember when I first set eyes on "Cun'!" Taylor—an honest-to-southern-goodness "Colonel" from the "ridges" of North "C'lina": how I took wondering joy of his soft-clipt, drawling speech, his Stonewall Jackson goatee, the deep-weathered gullies of his grey pantaloons, crannied like a topographical study of mountain creek-beds; but more natively romantic than all—the tidings of wonder which he brought to us in a small chunk of yellow sparkling ore—the actual, tangible token, to eye and finger-tip, of that miraculous Gold Mine in the North Carolina mountains, of which my father himself—actually my own father!—was a genuine speculative "share owner," thanks to the all-beneficence of Col. J. M. Taylor's "boss," Senator Jones of Nevada.

That little piece of ore was the visible sign of far, invisible journeyings and explorations on the part of my father, during that fall and winter and the following spring. By that magnet he was drawn from New York to North Carolina where, for about six months, he made his headquarters at Concord (in November) and Charlotte (Dec., '90, to May, '91), making from there various journeys on horseback to the mine of Senator Jones' investment, and investigating other "leads" over trails of mountain wildernesses on trips as far-ranging as West Virginia * and Georgia.

UNFINISHED WRITINGS; LEWIS MORRISON; QUARTERS IN WASHINGTON

Meanwhile, before starting south, since the gold in the mine was still only an asset of dreams, he had concluded arrangements for undertaking some writing work which he could carry with him to the mountains, from the earnings of which our little household was

^{*}From Charlotte, N. C., he wrote to me, Dec. 6, 1890: "I found Point Pleasant (West Virginia) geographically delightful—gastronomically fearful.... I will bring you the cotton plant, with the cotton in the pods, just ripe, and ready to be picked. I think the change of scene and air is doing me worlds of good.... I shall stop here for a while, going to Castor's Mills for Sunday, to the plantation of a Mr. Caton... God bless you, my own heart's son! I dare not tell you how much I long for the joy of lasting companionship between us."

enabled to remove for the winter, from Shirley to Washington,* where my father joined us from time to time, on trips north from Carolina.—The close of this year, 1890, closed the two decades of his professional career in New York City, as after his southern sojourn, until his death, his chief activities were to be centred in London and Chicago.

His writing work was the continuation of some which he had commenced under his (then cancelled) contract with J. M. Hill, and comprised the writing of a novel. † This, under a new agreement with Lewis Morrison, the actor,-who had under way a contemplated revival of Won at Last, renamed John Fleming's Wife,—was to have been written by MacKave both as a novel and as a play, the novel to be published before the production of the play, in which Morrison was to star. This arrangement, however, was brought to an abrupt close by the accidental burning, in April, 1891, of Morrison's production of Faust, a loss which altered Morrison's plans and put my father in one more financial dilemma.

To the potentialities of novel writing, and to interrupted experiments in its practice, during the last four years of his life, the gave considerable time and thought, seeking to express through that form some phases of a mystic idealism radically different in some respects from the social philosophy of his time. These experiments he had planned to continue and complete with his characteristic thoroughness, but the influx of different interests in developing a new theatre-art form prevented.

DRAMATISING "THE TEELES FAMILY": MR. POCKET-ALL AND HARRY HELP-HIMSELF

During that winter and spring of 1890-'91, in Washington, sev-

*"On December 18, 1890, we settled at 1512 13th St., N. W., at the house of Mrs. Hobson, some of us rooming nearby, at "the Gray's"—1342 Q St. On April 23, '91, we left Washington, spent a week in and about New York, and arrived in Shirley, May 1st.

† This novel (mentioned in his letter to Hill on pages ii, 259), with another

unfinished by my father, was left uncompleted by him, at his death. Very shortly before then, he stated in a letter that the MS. did not yet have his own critical approval, and was not in form to be published until after

the careful revision.

† "Upon one occasion," wrote his friend, Curtis Dunham, of Chicago, "barely a month before his death, when his mind had been especially active on the subject of novel-writing, he expressed regret that he had not given more attention to other than the dramatic form of literary composition.—"The picture presented by the novelist,' he said, 'is perfect, because it is conveyed direct from the printed page to the reader's imagination; but the dramatist's picture can only reach his audience through the medium of mechanical effects and the impersonation of characters which are always imperfect." Cf. pages ii, 406, and ii, 455.

eral recollections of my father come back to me. I had then, at the age of fifteen, just commenced to "dramatise" our family circle (and a few friends) in a series of dialogue-scenes, called Half Hour Happenings in the Teeles Family—the name Teeles being a transcription of Steele. The chief Dramatis Personæ of these Haps which have since then served to awaken reminiscent smiles during many years of family reunions—were the following members of the family: *

Morrison Teeles	FATHER
	their eldest son, HAROLD
	their third son, JAMES
	their fourth son, PERCY
	their fifth son, BENTON
	their daughter, HAZEL
Miss Harassed D'Enfants Stetson	
(Sanch Stateon Poven)	OUR "ATING SADIE"

(Sarah Stetson Pevear)

In the Second Hap, laid at our winter home in Washington, Morrison Teeles is depicted surrounded by his family, expressing to them his enthusiastic confidence in some of his business associates,-Mr. Pocket-all, Harry Help-himself and the Rev. Sweetliar Swindle; explaining, as well, the advantages of some of his recent schemes and inventions-for crossing the Atlantic in ten minutes by pneumatic tube; for a subaquatic summer resort in mid-ocean. provided with regular service of "nautali" (submarines †), for tourists and scientists; etc.—In the Fifth Hap, amid wild perturbations of trunk packing, furniture moving, expressmen and telegrams, Morrison Teeles enters at a climactic moment with the transmutating tidings, that "the gold mine has panned out superbly!"

On the evening t when I read aloud to him these juvenile funpokings at his own and the family's propensities, I recall the strange shadow of sadness that mingled with his smiles as he listened to me, little realising then what may have been passing through his mind in vistas of long, bitter struggles and disillusionments, which have only been revealed to me, since, by the writing of this memoir. -Again, at the production of an amateur play, Dr. Baxter's Great Invention, in which I acted the title rôle of an old inventor,

^{*} My brother, Will, who had died in 1889, was next younger than Harold.
† Submarines, of course, were then considered impracticable dreams; but
my father once told me that he had made an investment in a submarine
scheme, in the inventive processes of which he had had some part. # March 15, 1891.

I cherish yet the memory of that proud moment, when he gave me, with a great hug, his beaming approval of my performance.—At Washington, too, from the small pittance of his earnings that season, he insisted on providing me, for my health, with the twice-aweek rental of a riding horse, on which he taught me some memorable points of his own equestrianism.

INVENTING A QUARTZ CRUSHER; "OUR NATIONAL THEATRE" IN A "HERDIC"

On March 16, 1891, my sixteenth birthday, a boyish entry in my diary reads:

"Father came from the Patent Office in time to lunch with us. He brought with him some ore from the mine; also—the drawing of an invention of his for a quartz crusher."

On the next day, another entry states: "With Father I drove to numerous places in a herdic. At Louth & Co., 108 2d St., S. W., he bought a mining instrument."

That drive "in a herdic" remains for me an unforgettable memory. Amid the rumbling and jolting of the cab over cobblestones, or through streets deep with black mire, he talked to me of themes and ambitions which have been motives of my own after life. While crossing Pennsylvania Avenue, he pointed down the long Avenue toward the gracious dome of the Capitol, rising whitely serene in the blue, spring morning, and said to me, with an eager, far-off gleam in his eyes:—"Percy, be sure of this.—Over there, one of these days, there must rise another dome, to companion that one in beauty with the eternal meanings of America: the dome of our National Theatre."

Two years later, a lofty dome—born of those eternal meanings—was to rise momentarily in the blue air above the majestic "White City" of the World's Fair,* at Chicago: the dome designed by my father to entemple his vision of Columbus, The World Finder. Like Shelley's "dome of many coloured glass," though years long ago it lay shattered in dust, yet in years long-to-be it shall survive imperishable.—In my father's ideal of the theatre, the world meanings of America and the art perfected by Shakespeare and Sophocles were never divorced, but were blended in one deeply "national" institution.

AN INSTRUMENT SHOP AND THE VISION OF INVENTION

On that same "herdic" drive, he had planned to stop only a

* Inventions, which were to be developed in his Spectatorium, at Chicago, were even then evolving in his mind.

few minutes at the store of Louth & Co.—a quiet, far-removed repository of strange instruments. But as soon as we had entered the clean, spacious shop, almost silent except for the softly audible tickings of innumerable clock-like presences gleaming behind glass in cabinets of brass and copper, then I guessed—from the couchant brightness in his glance, tensely keen as a leopard's quivering to leap at his quarry,—that those insatiate eyes must first devour there many a subtle delicacy of invention, and consume a thousand tickings of those reticent instruments, before ever the herdic driver would open his cab door to receive us again. My guess was not mistaken.

One instrument in particular he must have spent an hour in investigating: a stately wall-chronometer, whose soundless pendulum (so we were told by the soft-spoken clerk) had varied, in its calm Olympic swinging, only five-eighths of a second in ten years. My father was held there, fascinated,—rapt by a projection of the human mind outperfecting the instrument that created it.

"Here, my son," he said, "is where the Visible World connotes the Invisible. Here is a transcendency of invention, wherein the mastery of material means, in itself, reveals immaterial ends.

"Look at this metallic compound, so perfectly co-ordinated to its purpose. Its elements were once crude ores—disjointed, of the earth earthy. Imagination has transmuted these to a single spirit—delicately obedient to Eternal Law. Hark to those soundless tickings! What are they saying?

'Elimination!'—'Co-ordination!'

"Those are the reiterative watchwords of Art's ancient timepiece.—But what if we, the inventive artists, possessed that poise?—We, poor unself-mastered individuals! What if human society might achieve such consummate symmetry of its parts—reason, passion, love, so divinely balanced in sentient structure, that humanity in motion might pulse obedient to the rhythmic commands of God, in a calm utility to His aims—comparable to that clock on the wall, in its service to ours?

"Are we puny inventors to pause on the very threshold of Invention—mere apprentices of Mammon? Or shall we enter the laboratory of the Invisible—and become there master-craftsmen of God, by inventing the instrumentalities of self-perfection?" *

 $^{^{\}ast}$ Cf. on page i, 125, his thoughts, as a youth, on machinery and "the Use of Man."

These, of course, were not his literal words, but these perhaps may suggest the thoughtful meanings he expressed to me there, in his quiet eloquence. Passing then to other instruments and inventions, he examined their works, till finally (as noted in my diary) "he bought a mining instrument," to take back with him to the beckoning Gold-Mine in the mountains. Then—three hours and a half after we had entered that shop of Fairyland—we re-entered our "herdic" of sordidly accumulating cabfare, and drove home.

"OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY": GOLD ORE-AND HEARTS

Within a few days, he was again "over the hills and far away," following a golden thread of prospective fortune across the Carolina foothills into the southern mountains.—Despite the tortuous windings of that thread, despite its clusive goal, the pinch of poverty, the suspense of fluctuating hopes and disappointments, the arduous toils of the trail, that emancipation of the wilderness was a glad and beneficent exchange for the fury-driven bondage of his professional life. No contrast could have been more freshly wild or exhilarating.

Here in the silence and sublimity of the elements, among landscapes that allured with unfamiliar beauty, nobly aloof in natural grandeur, yet intimately homely in their human contacts and simplicities of character: here at last was refuge—from a sophisticated cosmopolis of roiling ambitions and races—in the ancient leisured heart of his own pioneer folk.

Mule-back or horse-back, foot in stirrup splashing the yellow creek-fords, or feeling ground on slippery paths, where the nose of his led saddle-nag pointed down precipitous gulches toward mallowy bottoms, where the grey log-cabins held their sparse fare, but prodigal welcome, of coffee and corn-pone and old fables by the fire-log, within their rickety palings. Here in the buttonwoods were no busy "box-office" pilferers, other than the peeping woodpeckers in their high-hole windows, counting the change of silvery hours. Here were no episcopate symbols of lost "royalties," except the scarlet caps of cardinal birds, bobbing before dim thrones of mountain-ivy; nor any "stolen laurels," save those that crackled cheerily under the supper-pot, swung from its crooked tripod, in homage to the princely "stranger" at the gate.

On that mountain voyage of discovery, like all "strangers" indeed, when vouched for by a genuine "Ca'lina Cun'l," like Senator Jones' mining expert, Col. Taylor, Steele MacKaye was given true

native welcome as a prince, without inquisition of his patrimony or pocket-money. "Stranger than fiction," then, he must have felt himself in that contrasted truth of American life, and small wonder that he entered with zest into his new-found heritage, as "Jack of hearts" in a square deal, that only risked a "joker" in the hand of Fortune. Material gold may have lured him there, but while seeking it, a mintage more immaterial was poured in his path, gratis and shining,—a coinage of ancient speech, minted in golden hearts of homely folk, his kindred of old: Celts from the MacAoidh Scotch heather, Saxons from the "Steele" hedgerows of English shires,lost for wandering centuries, but here rejoined in the stately courtesy, the unkempt charm, the filth and fleas of Appalachian cahins.

"FORGOTTEN LORE": NOTES OF MOUNTAIN SPEECH, 1891 AND 1921

Thinking backward, I recall now-what had long lain dormant in my memory-how he told me, as a boy in Washington, of the outlandish, lovable folk he had met in the mountains, on those far mining trips; folk, he said, full of "forgotten lore," for whom the latest and only war-campaign they talked about was the great "Rebellion"-not against Abe Lincoln's "Stovepipe" of '61 (a hat of office they had never heard of), but against King George's Crown, of '76!

Recently, another token of my father's sojourn in those mountains came to my knowledge for the first time, with a startling strangeness. I was busy, one midnight,—in my little hillside studio, at Cornish, N. H., -going over unsorted papers of his, in connection with this memoir, when a gust of air from a window I had just open fluttered out, from a pile of his manuscripts, a single sheet of yellow paper-blowing it to my feet, on the floor by my chair.

That same night,* I had been revising the printer's proofs of a Mountain play + of mine, which I was then preparing for production,—its scenes laid in the Appalachians of Kentucky, the imaginative material for which I had gathered, two years before (1921), on a sojourn of my own among those mountain people, whose ancient lore and speech, and modes of thought and character, had peculiarly stirred me to creative work as a dramatist: the first, I then be-

^{*} December 11th, 1923.

[†] This Fine-Pretty World, a comedy of the Kentucky mountains, produced Dec. 26, 1923, by the Neighbourhood Playhouse, New York (published by Macmillan at that time): a play which I had earlier submitted to the New York Theatre Guild, in October, 1922,—a year before the first production of other "mountain" plays in New York.

lieved, who in that special craftsmanly capacity had ventured, as a pilgrim "stranger," along those remote Appalachian trails, hunting his long-imagined quarry. On that pilgrimage, I had taken many notes of the mountain speech.

Stooping now from my chair, I raised the yellow sheet of paper to the lamp beside me. On the paper were written some notes in hand script. I stared—bewildered. . . . For some moments it impossibly seemed that the script was in my own hand, for the notes -disjoined words and phrases-leapt to my eyes and mind, like mountain memories-dimly my own, yet different. . . . Then, in a flash of revealment-moving me deeply with the sense of other strange extensions of my father's life through mine-I knew that I had not been the first such pilgrim; that, thirty years earlier, my father, also, as a dramatist, had carried in his nag-saddle an Appalachian note-book, for there, on the yellow paper, in his own script, I read these words *-overheard by him from the mouths of Southern mountaineers:

"Laws-a-massy Ingins Oh la Bully of the tan yard I'll whoop the whole bilin' of ye They've tititratiously ruinated me, so they is. Oudacious cus-o' thunder Sitivation What upon yeath—mought afire—that-a-way Dadfetch me! I be dadfetcht! Toated the hickory Whar upon yeath can they be gwin in sich a horryment For a coon's age In cahoot with 'em."

Till that moment (on Dec. 11, 1923), I had never known that my father had been interested in the mountain speech, or in the writing of a mountain play. My own mountain pilgrimage (in 1921) had not been prompted by any filial thought of following his footsteps in that respect, for I was then wholly unaware that he

*A few of these words and phrases, here noted by my father, I have since then purposely incorporated in Appalachian works of my own, with the thought that, so, they might to that extent attain some portion of his creative purpose in recording them. Cf., in this chapter (or preceding one), photo of Steele MacKaye's notes in his hand-writing.

† As literary traditions are often prone to establish themselves wrongly from statements not sufficiently definite, it may be well, for the sake of clearness, to repeat definitely that my sojourn in the Kentucky mountains, in 1921 was not occasioned, in any respect whatever, by my father's sojourn in the Carolina mountains, in 1891.

in the Carolina mountains, in 1891.

had ever had any other interests in the mountains than his gold mine project. After finding the above notes in his handwriting, however, and after beginning (in the spring of 1924) the intensive writing of this memoir, I learned further, from further data and investigations, concerning the matters here recorded.*

A RICH FOLK THEME: SYNGE AND MARK TWAIN-AN ASTRAL "IMAGE"

Many other persons, of course, besides my father and myself, have taken notes of the Southern mountain speech; but among such persons, so far as I have seen recorded, none, I think (before the sojourns above mentioned) ever gathered such notes as a working artist of the theatre, with the definite aim of creatively incorporating, in drama imbued with folk-spirit, a first-hand insight, of ear and eye and listening imagination, into the native speech and thinking modes of that mountain people, acquired by sympathetic life in their midst.

For the above-cited notes of my father (reproduced here, as an illustration) were not taken haphazard. They were gathered at first-hand in the mountains, as records definitely related to his special creative purpose—the writing of a play, which he had already begun there, on a mountain theme. Its theme—a gold-mine swindle in the southern mountains—was one abounding in rich folk material, elements of comedy and wild romantic hoax, involving naïve rascalities of native character, providing ingredients of a dramaturgic menu to which the astral spirits of Synge and Mark Twain might jubiliantly have sat down, for a collaboration of their own cooking.

But Synge, as dramatist, was then a decade and a half ahead in Ireland; and, in America, Mark Twain, despite his rare folkintegrity in Huckleberry Finn, had no technical sense of the theatre. and little care for native authenticity when it came to stage productions of his folk themes and characters. + So the "astral image" fades in hypothesis.

^{*}Another significant "extension" of Steele MacKaye's Appalachian interests (unconsciously "carried on") is suggested by an article by his son, Benton, in the Journal of the American Institute of Architects, October, 1921. That article, entitled, An Appalachian Trail—A Project in Regional Planning, with others from the same pen, expresses the far-seeing constructive genius of Benton MacKaye, who has recently been hailed as "father" of the "Thousand Mile Appalachian Trail," from Maine to Georgia.

† To Augustin Daly, who wished to stage his character, Colonel Sellars (in a dramatisation of The American Claimant), Mark Twain wrote: "You bang away and dramatise the book your way, and that will be my way." (Montrose J. Moses' The American Dramatist, 1925, page 182.)

MACKAYE'S "STATE LINE"; THE FIRST APPALACHIAN DRAMATIST

In the spring of '91, however, Steele MacKaye—being himself, and not an imagined composite—sat down by himself and began a play, which—in relation to its authentic conception of treatment, in speech and theme,—as a piece of native pioneering, records him, in the history of our American drama, as certainly the first folk-dramatist of the Appalachians, and probably as the first "mountain" dramatist in the modern theatre. To this play he refers in this excerpt of a letter to my mother, written in late May of '91:

"I am at work on a new play called *The State Line*, which is a dramatic exposé of the rascalities attending the greatest mining swindle ever perpetrated upon the public. I have all the inside facts from the superintendent of the mine, and it really is full of dramatic and humorous elements which promise to give the play popularity."

Within a few weeks of the writing of this letter, the whole tenor of my father's plans was abruptly altered, and never again gave him opportunity to turn back to these mountain interests and folk studies. In consequence, his play, *The State Line*, was never finished, and remains only as a tantalising potentiality, one more on the large list of his bold trail-blazings—a landmark of "mountainy" significance.

A "NEW PUMP" AT THE GOLD MINE; OFF FOR GEORGIA

The beginnings of this abrupt change of plans took place in June, '91. The sequence of events, in part leading up to it, is touched upon in these five excerpts of letters from him to my mother:

- (1):—(Central House, Charlotte, N. C., April 11, 1891): "I can hope for nothing from the mine for many weeks, but it is a prospect I feel bound to stick to, and work my hardest at. I go back to the mine Monday, to start new pump.—It will take two weeks to discover whether there is really ore enough to justify the erection of a mill or not. After the cutting of new drafts, and cleaning out the water, I hope to have the mine ready to show the agent of Senator Jones."
- (2):—(Central Hotel, Charlotte, N. C., April 22d, '91): "I have only just returned from the mine, where days of hard work in getting machinery in place have passed with great velocity and, as yet, little accomplishment. The machinery being old, it seemed as tho' we should never be able to rouse it to sufficient energy to empty the mine.—We succeeded at last, and now I hope the labour of developing the extent of the mine will proceed. . . . I have an opportunity of getting a good

commission on the sale of certain mines in Georgia, of which I have heard great things. Taylor, the mining expert, starts to-morrow, and I shall go with him. I expect to be gone a week. . . . I shall probably go to New York about the middle of May, and hope to be able then to run on to Shirley.—Bless dear Percy for his delightful letter.— I am working with hope and courage. If only you and the dear children can receive some reward for your long endurance of many trials, I shall be willing to suffer any pangs.—With deepest, deathless love, S. M."

NEW YORK; PLANS FOR PARIS; COL. TOM AS A TERRIBLE TANGLE

(3):—(New York, Astor House—undated: late May—1891): "I am worried to death at the news of your health. . . . I may go to Shirley this week, but it looks now as though I should have to return to the mine. . . . I have offered to go to Paris for the estate * for \$500—to be paid me for my expenses, time and services. If this is accepted, I suppose I shall leave for Paris about the first of July. . . . I am trying to get something out of 'Col. Tom'—or 'A Terrible Tangle,' which is my new name for the play. . . . I had a long delightful letter from dear Jack, telling me how fortunately he is situated in Cambridge with Prof. Shaler. I believe all our boys are going to be lucky and get on fast toward prosperity. Their progress in intellectual vigour, and spiritual character, is the guarantee of their future welfare. . . . For the present, address me at this Hotel, where I am living 'on air—promise crammed.'"

"SPLENDID NEWS FROM MINE"; "SICKENING SUSPENSE"

- (4):—(New York, June 3d, '91):—"I have had splendid news from the mine, and start with Senator Jones' inspector to-morrow afternoon for the final examination which is to decide the fate of the mine.—If the report I have received prove true, I shall get some money at last. Jones will immediately put up a mill, and start in getting bullion. I expect to get back to New York by Monday next.—I suppose I shall go to Paris about July 1st. . . . When I see you all, I will give you the long story of the past few weeks of sickening suspense. All looks well now. God grant all will prove well soon. The mine may be our salvation. With a universe of boundless love to you all.—S. M."
- (5):—(New York: June 8th, 1891):—"Well, my dear, here I am, and here I have been ever since I wrote you last, expecting every moment to go south to the mine, and waiting for Jones' expert to be able to get away. This continuous suspense and waiting are horrible, but must be borne. I am promised positively for Friday.†—So you see

* The estate of his father, Col. James MacKaye, who died in Paris, three years before.

†The mine never "panned out" for my father. Three months later (Sept. 28), he wrote from London, to my mother: "News from the mine is disheartening. The superintendent fell dangerously ill, and came near dying. It is all outlay and no income from it now. The plant for working the mine is costing more than was calculated, and the delays in getting to work are heart-sickening."

I might have spent my birthday with you after all—if I had known. Don't regret this, however, for, had I gone, I should not have been able to deposit the last \$20 for you, and the money is of more consequence than my forlorn presence. I have deposited \$25 more for you to-day, and every cent I can get shall go the same way. My expenses south are to be paid by Senator Jones. . . . I cannot reach Shirley now before the end of next week."

SHIRLEY FOURTH OF JULY; HORSEBACK; A MIDNIGHT WALK

It was not, however, till the Fourth of July that he actually reached Shirley, joyfully welcomed home to join us in that boyhood festival. My own meagre boy-diary records the following:

(Sat., July 4, 1891): "The Antiques and Horribles came up to the common. Walked toward the village and met Father, with Mr. Cram.* Most of day walked and talked t with him. Fireworks on the common. to which we all went. To bed at 12.45.—Clear, cool and windy." . . . (July 5): "After breakfast, there was (and is) a grand discussion concerning driving and horseback riding for this afternoon. There is no decision as yet (10.30 A.M.). . . . At 3 P.M., Mr. Cram's carriage came, and Mother, Father, Miss Stanton, † Hazel and I went to drive. Benton rode Mr. Melvin Longley's 'Sally.' I rode Sally part of the time, so did Father. We went to Lunenburg, stopped at a house, picked and bought some cherries. Had a delightful time!-Returned after 7 P.M. In evening, stayed up, after the others and had a talk and walk with Father. To bed at 1.15." . . . (July 6): "In the morning, while Mother, Father, Hal and I were talking over Father's trip to Europe, Jamie walked in. Father had waited over to see him, and so now went on the 12.38 train from the Village—via Aver, to N. Y. City. He sails next Sat. for Europe on 'estate' business."

When my brother "Jamie walked in" then (from Prof. N. S. Shaler's, at Harvard, which he entered that fall), our family were regathered from many winds for a brief hour—unaware that we should never again be gathered, all together, at the little cottage home. My night talk with my father, till the witching hour of "1.15," as we walked under the stars, was partly concerned with his, and my own, eager desire that I might accompany him abroad. To my mother, he wrote of this, on his return to New York:

^{*} The perennial Charon of Shirley, still hearty at ninety (in 1926).

[†] In these talks, he recounted to us his adventures in the southern mountains.

[‡] Dr. Kate S. Stanton of Newport, R. I. (dramatised in my family Haps as Miss Karma Nirvana) was an old pupil of my father and a devoted friend of our family.

"A TERRIBLE TEMPTATION"; CLOSE OF AN ERA; SEVENTEEN YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

"It has been a terrible temptation to me to send for dear Percy and afford him the opportunity of seeing Europe with me, but when I consider all things, it seems best for me to deprive myself of this delight. The danger of thus preventing him from being of service to you during my absence, and the need of saving money, urge me to decide against Percy's going with me.—It almost breaks my heart, because it would be such a relief to my loneliness, and such a supreme delight to all my days, if he could only go. However, I must be resigned to forego this happiness." *

So an era of innumerable labours was about to close for my father. Since his last voyage in an ocean steamship, there had passed seventeen years, during which in America he had written and produced seventeen plays; had built, founded and directed two of the principal theatres of New York City; had launched three schools, permanently founding one; had established his rank as the foremost inventor of the theatre; had toured his country north, east, south, and west, as actor, lecturer, and exponent of a movement in art and education which had revolutionised methods of instruction, founded schools, journals and professorships; and had influenced through his varied works millions of his fellow countrymen.

"The work of Steele MacKaye," wrote the dramatist and poet, Joseph I. C. Clarke (April 20, 1912), "speaks superbly for him. His infectious idealism pervaded all his undertakings. In the production of his plays, he undertook not merely the stage management but the instruction of his companies in dramatic expression. The beneficial results with the actors and actresses were extraordinary.—Always the busiest of men—busy to the seeming verge of breaking down—the deepened lines on the handsome face I first saw at Steinway Hall, in '71, the nervous, hastening manner . . . told the story. It is grievous to think he benefited so little from his tremendous stage successes, Hazel Kirke, Paul Kauvar, etc. . . . Always I found him brave and unconquerable in a world that did not always appreciate him. . . . He was altogether a wonderful man, a strong writer,—a great pioneer and discoverer."

PENNILESS, SANGUINE, RESOURCEFUL-A NEW VOYAGE: AU REVOIR!

With the pioneering labours of his imagination wrought in the tapestried years closing behind him, the integrity of that record beheld him now burdened with clutching debt: a worker—practi-

^{*} To forego that happiness was a lifelong deprivation to me. At that date, my father's *Hazel Kirke* was still playing on tour and in stock—still without remuneration to its author and without its author's name.

cally penniless; a dreamer—impractically sanguine; an artist,—nobly self-disciplined; a master of men—resourceful with the will of a selfless vision of service to his fellows.

So, starting alone for England, bound on a voyage of discovery he himself did not then dream of, on July 11th, '91, he went on board the Royal Mail Steamer, *Arizona*, and wrote back to the Shirley cottage these lines of good-bye, for the waiting sharer of his works and dreams—my mother, and through her for us, their children:

"Dear precious heart—The ship is about to leave, but I am hurrying to write you a few last words before we go .- God bless all you dear ones for your precious words of farewell. I will answer you all from Queenstown, writing to you during the voyage over, unless the ocean should overpower me.—I shall do my utmost to hurry through my business abroad, and return with speed. My London address will be Langham Hotel.—I do so hope you will be able to get a servant, so that you and dear Aunt Sadie may get some relief. Do take the greatest care of yourself, so that I may see you, on my return, clothed in all the blessed happiness of health. . . . I hope Percy will ride horseback. . . . I trust you will get the money all right, which I arranged for, from Col. Taylor.—I forgot to tell you that I have father's gold watch * (safe from the pawnbroker's), so you need not worry about that. . . . I must hurry. We are nearly off. Oh, God bless you all! May the beneficent forces of the universe shield, quide, and enrich you!-Au revoir, my treasures !- Your father, husband, friend-Steele MacKaye."

^{*} Cf. page ii, 141, and ii, 211.

CHAPTER XXVII

DESIGNING OVERSEAS

London

(Paris, New York, Shirley)

July-Nov., '91

EASTWARD-WEST: DISTINGUISHED WELCOME IN LONDON

SAILING WESTWARD, FOUR HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE, THE OLD DIScoverer of America had sought a clue to the far east. Sailing eastward, the hero of our strange story was to discover, before his return, a clue to the great west, which should link him, in life and death, with that old brave goal of Columbus—the finding of a new world.

Having posted a home-greeting, from aboard ship "off the Irish coast," Steele MacKaye arrived in London, July 19, 1891. For him, it was a different London from that he had left seventeen years before, when he had written in youthful impatience to his friend, Alger, in Boston:

"England is too narrow, slow and conventional to see the worth of new ideas. The very people who, from extent of culture, might best understand, are the very ones who least like being 'bored' with fresh conceptions. . . . America alone is broad and free and earnest enough." *

By that faith in the receptivity to idealism of his native land he had been justified, and was still to be justified, in results, however decimated some of these had been by crudities and misconceptions of an inchoate groping public.—Now, when he set foot once more in England, he was received there with instant welcome by the foremost leaders of his profession, in warm recognition of his creative audacity for "new ideas" in his own country, wrought for the larger world of international ideals. In this, his distinguished reception was wholly unsought and unlooked-for by himself.

"Modest, noble-hearted and generous to a fault," said a fellow professional,† who knew him well, "Steele MacKaye has ever lived for the good of his fellows and the ennoblement of art."

^{*} Cf. page i, 226.

[†] Roland Reed, the actor, in his speech at the Scenitorium, Chicago, Feb. 27, 1894.

At London, now, in the maturity of his powers, these gracious traits of his were given public acknowledgment on a scale of splendid hospitality and fraternity seldom if ever before extended, by the undisputed head of the theatre's art in England, to an actordramatist-producer from across the seas.

HENRY IRVING'S 40-COURSE BANQUET; CHARLES WYNDHAM'S DINNER

Henry Irving was then fifty-three, in the vigourous prime of his career. Four years later he was to be knighted by Queen Victoria. Thirteen years earlier—in the year before Steele MacKaye became founder and director of the Madison Square Theatre, New York—Irving had begun his directorship of the Lyceum Theatre, in London. Four years older than MacKaye, he had been a cordial friend of his American confrère for nearly twenty years, ever since MacKaye had made his early success as *Hamlet* in England, in association with the gifted sister of Irving's stage-associate, Ellen Terry.

On his frequent tours in America, as we have already glimpsed through these pages, Irving had shown zestful interest in Mac-Kaye's methods as theatre artist and inventor, developed by him at his theatres in New York. There also Irving had entered warmly into the fellowship of theatrical club-life, wherein he had partaken of whole-hearted hospitalities, at which MacKaye very often had been the presiding host, as leader of the Lambs' Club social life for over a decade.—In America, too, Irving had not been unmindful of the frequent, published expressions of comparison, pro and con, between his own methods as a producing artist and director and those of MacKave, with whom he could the more easily entertain a friendly feeling of public rivalry, with no dread of ill consequences, in as much as a perennial provincialism in America—despite all screams of the political Eagle—bestows a royal passage for English prestige. Irving, however, never exhibited that air of "a certain condescension in foreigners," especially in those from "the Mother country," which prompted the historic, self-respecting allusions of Emerson and Lowell. Moreover, in regard to MacKaye and his works, Irving's friendship and admiration were too real and outspoken to cater to any such provincialism. So, in this unfeigned spirit of a fellow artist, Henry Irving looked upon the unheralded arrival of Steele MacKaye in London as an appropriate occasion for expressing to him personally—and through him to the theatrical fraternity of America—his own appreciation of MacKaye's many years' service to their common temple, the Theatre, in a way also to comprise, unofficially, a representatively British expression of the same, through other Englishmen, Irving's London associates.* In this he had naturally the intent of returning in kind those numerous expressions of goodwill overseas, where Mac-Kaye had been spokesman of American public opinion toward himself, in relation to England's advancement of the theatre's art.—This token of English counter-goodwill took the form of a banquet given by Irving in honour of MacKaye, very shortly after the latter arrived in England. Concerning the lavish scale of this event, my father wrote, in a letter to my mother: †

"I had not been in London a week before Irving gave me a dinner at the Savoy Hotel, which is the most expensive in London—that had at least forty courses, and must have cost him at least five hundred dollars."

For that occasion, the older trio of MacKaye's English intimates—Tom Taylor, Charles Reade and Wilkie Collins—were no longer there to greet him, Taylor having died twelve years—Reade, seven years—and Collins, two years—earlier. Among younger friends, however, was Joseph Hatton, novelist, playwright and editor of The Hornet, with whom he had collaborated a play, A Woman of the World, ‡ and who had lectured at his Madison Square Theatre, during his directorship there. Of English colleagues in the actormanager profession, Sir Charles Wyndham (then not yet knighted) was another friend of long standing who was prompt to show MacKaye hospitality by another distinguished dinner in his honour. They had met not infrequently in America, since their first London association in Lady Martin's revival of As You Like It (1873), wherein Wyndham had acted LeBeau, and MacKaye—Orlando.

†From London, Sept. 30, '91: quoted in full on page 1298. ‡ Cf. page i, 359.

^{*}Another impulse for this welcome of Irving to his American friend may well have arisen from the fact that, hardly two years earlier, Irving had been prompted by the immense success of MacKaye's Paul Kauvar in America, to revive at his own London theatre a French Revolutionary play (The Dead Heart—in which Gordon Craig made his "début" as a youth),—thereby having prevented Henry Miner's plans, at that time, for a London production of MacKaye's Paul Kauvar. In consequence, that play had not achieved its first production in London, until May, 1890, when William Harris produced it at Drury Lane, with remarkable success—lessened in novelty, however, by the then very recent familiarity of the London public with the French Revolutionary elements of The Dead Heart.—Cf. footnotes on pages ii, 162, 165, 188, 237-238.

†From London, Sept. 30. '91: guoted in full on page 1298.

"THE WORLD'S INTELLECTUAL CENTRE"; PLANS FOR PARIS AND BERLIN

After his long and painful experiences with a very different type of theatrical magnates in America, Steele MacKaye felt keenly the relish of these friendly contacts with artist leaders of a truer courtesy and discernment. Except for the relentless clutch of his poverty, this contrasted exhilaration of life and outlook might well—with a little margin of leisured opportunity—have led there to significant results, fruitful not simply to his own career but to a greatly desirable growth of Anglo-American relationship in the artistries—rather than in the commercial rivalries—of the theatre. But such a consummation was not, in this case, to be. About a fortnight after his arrival in London, he wrote to my mother:

"Dear Heart-I have been driven day and night, while here, trying to arrange for the placing of my plays. My prospects are very good. Irving gave me a splendid dinner; so has Wyndham. . . . All sorts of pleasant attentions have been shown to me here. I am sure, if I could only obtain opening enough to enable me to remain in London, that I would have ten chances here where I have one in America. This is really the intellectual centre of the civilised world. I never realised this so much as I have at this visit. . . . I go to Paris to-day. I am anxious to finish up that business and return to America with the least delay. I have taken passage for the 12th of August, but fear I shall not get away before the 19th. I am trying hard to complete an English version of A Terrible Tangle, hoping to dispose of it here before I leave. . . . I hope you receive your money all right. I dare not think about it, I am already so worried here. I shall soon be back, and then I shall be able to know and contend with what it is not well for me to know where I am. . . . With deathless love-S. M."

In his boyhood and young manhood, Paris had been to him an adopted home and a fascinating laboratory of art. His last visit there had been on a hurried trip, amid strenuous preparations for his London Hamlet début, in 1873, when he had sought out his master in acting, Régnier, director of the Théâtre Français, and had tried to place there the French play of his friend, Charles Reade. Régnier was now no more, but many of his old associates of the French National Theatre were still there to greet him; and through these he set on foot tentative plans for the future production in Paris of the vast new theatre enterprise, which was then just beginning to take rounded form in his mind; plans which—he afterward told me—hopefully included their extension to Berlin, Vienna and other capitals of Europe.

Having re-established in Paris certain personal contacts impor-

tant to these tentative aims, and having disposed of his business on behalf of his father's estate (in which he himself had no part as a beneficiary), he was back, within a fortnight, at his lodgings in London.

A TERRIBLE TANGLE AS COUSIN LARRY FOR KATE CLAXTON

A version of his play, A Terrible Tangle (formerly Col. Tom), laid in America, at Newport, was read by him, on August 14th, at the Victoria Hotel, London, to Kate Claxton (Mrs. Charles A. Stevenson), who was staying there. About a week later he signed with her a contract for its American production (by Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson) under the title of Cousin Larry.*

The financial terms of this contract, though modest, were at the time very helpful to my father's pressing emergency, in enabling him to eke out for a little his stay in London, and thus to set on foot there the culminating enterprise of his life. This enterprise is referred to, for the first time in this note to my mother, on August 29th, '91:

"THE GREAT DISCOVERY"; MACKAYE WINS BRITISH SUPPORT FOR CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR

"My dear anxious heart-It looks now as though I ought to stay here. It seems folly for me to run away from the opportunities that appear to be opening before me in this city. I have more friends here and a clearer field before me.—I am rewriting A Terrible Tangle for England, laying the scene in Scotland and at Ramsgate. I have sent for Sir Alan's Wife. † I believe I can produce both these plays, the coming season. . . . In a week, I shall be able to send you more definite news of everything. I can only say things seem to be shaping for practical results."

About a week later, these "opportunities opening before" him came to a focus at a brilliant dinner of which he was the host. On September 6, 1891, the New York Herald published the following dispatch:

"London, September 5 .- Steele MacKaye gave a magnificent banquet to Henry Irving last night. It was an unusually brilliant affair. Among those who sat around the gorgeous flower-wreathed table were: Henry

^{**}Cousin Larry, however, was never produced.—"The reason we did not produce the play," Mrs. Stevenson wrote me (in 1916), "was that our plans for 1892 were entirely changed by Mr. Stevenson entering into a business pursuit. We remained in Chicago during the Exposition, and did nothing theatrical for a couple of years."

†*Sir Alan's Wife, an English version of his play, Won at Last, had been acted at Herne's Bay, England, August 25, 1888.

Irving, Chauncey Depew, Charles A. Dana, General Wilson, General Butterworth, Major Moses P. Handy, Senator Higgins of Delaware, Colonel Ochiltree, Joseph P. Hatton, Joseph Knight of the London Globe, Bram Stoker, Charles Loveday, Louis Sterne, Edward Fox, Creighton Webb and Josiah Caldwell. . . . The stories about Irving's illness are bosh. He looks pale but it is due to his tremendous preparations of *Henry VIII*, which is to be presented on a more splendid scale than anything before presented in England. The very shoestrings are to be historical."

The direct occasion of this dinner to Irving was, of course, a return of friendly courtesies on the part of my father. (It will soon be seen that, though "brilliant," the "banquet" was not as magnificent" or "gorgeous" as conveyed by cable.) The dinner's indirect and far-reaching occasion was afterward described by one of the guests there present, Major Moses P. Handy, President of the Clover Club of Philadelphia and World's Fair Commissioner, who had come to London, with his fellow Commissioner, General Benjamin A. Butterworth, in the interests of the great Columbian Exposition, then under way at Chicago on an unexampled scale of world co-operation, to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus.

For its success the clear understanding and approval of its objects by the leading journalists of London, with resulting goodwill of British public opinion, were absolutely essential. In the late summer of '91, however, that understanding and goodwill had not yet been secured, and the World's Fair commissioners were still on the anxious seat.—This rather critical situation Major Handy confided to his old friend, MacKaye, in whose fertile imagination there was already forming a grand-scale conception of art and invention dramaticly interpretive of the basic motive of the Columbia Exposition itself.

HIS "SUPERB DINNER" TO IRVING CONVENES ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LEADERS

In consequence, MacKaye's idea began "to rise to the occasion" of his friend Major Handy's urgent dilemma in a way also to assert the projection of his own splendid dreams, as Major Handy himself afterward narrated, in this excerpt from a signed article by him in the Chicago Inter Ocean (Feb. 27, '94):

"MacKaye was in London when the thought came to him to present the results of thirty years' study to Chicago as a feature of the Columbian Exposition. He was then in straitened circumstances, butwith characteristic generosity and public spirit—he helped the World's Fair project along by giving a dinner, inviting among others one of the members who was an old friend.* . . . His idea was to rise to the occasion to enthuse certain eminent men, each of whom was in his way potent in influence. He gathered at his board, in honour of Henry Irving, half a dozen English journalists and Bram Stoker, and for the American contingent—Chauncey M. Depew, etc. (the list named above), George R. Peck, the London correspondents of the leading American newspapers and two or three members of the World's Fair Commission to Europe.—The dinner was superb, the speeches were brilliant, and MacKaye cleverly succeeded in putting everybody affirmatively on record in the matter of the coming Exposition.

"That night, the Spectatorium had birth in his brain, although many a weary day passed before it was christened. That night, several great English newspapers abandoned their hostility, and the goodwill of the last of the American correspondents in London was secured. That night, new influences in behalf of the World's Fair were set at work, at home and abroad. That night, MacKaye determined, for once and all, to link his life with Chicago, and to make this city the scene of the

culminating effort of his genius."

On that night, in short, Steele MacKaye had made "the Great Discovery" for embodying his own life-vision; and on that night Henry Irving gathered from the eloquence of MacKaye a first inkling of that colossal undertaking in the theatre's art, of which many of the after influences were to revolutionise the methods of stage production pertaining to-day, while others were to vibrate as potentialities still of our future. That night also was recalled by Irving with a tender poignancy, when—two years and a half later—he sent his last touching tribute to the genius of his friend, lying dead in Chicago, under the panoply of his proven dreams.

That night, as well, my father himself described, about a month after it, in the following letter (Sept. 30th) to my mother, who had read the cabled report to America, quoted above:

CHAUNCEY DEPEW, C. A. DANA, GEN'LS. WILSON AND BUTTERWORTH, BRAM STOKER, JOS. KNIGHT, ETC.

"I now find myself absolutely penniless, and living on credit at my lodgings. I am struggling with the scheme, of which I have already written you, but it is one of those great enterprises, involving a large amount of money, which always move slowly.

"You have heard of my dinner to Irving, which of course has been immensely exaggerated by cable to America. It was a very simple, unpretentious, and inexpensive affair given at my own lodging. The personnel of the dinner was a distinguished one, and the conversation

^{*} I.e., Major Handy himself.

and speeches exceedingly brilliant.—As an intellectual feast, it was very remarkable; as a gastronomic exhibition, it was the simplest, and the least worthy of notice.—The gentlemen who cable here for the Sun and Herald are warm friends of mine, and therefore they cabled, without my knowledge, reports of the affair which gave my friends in America a very wrong impression of the splendour of the banquet itself.

"I had not been in London a week before Irving gave me a dinner—at the Savoy Hotel, which is the most expensive in London—that had at least forty courses and must have cost him at least \$500.—My dinner to Irving consisted of eight courses and cost seven shillings a head.—My guests were Henry Irving, Chauncey M. Depew,* Charles A. Dana (of the Sun), Gen'l James A. Wilson (who captured Jeff Davis), Gen'l Benj. Butterworth and Major Moses P. Handy (The World's Fair Commissioners); Senator Higgins of Delaware, Commander Emory (who rescued the Greely explorers in the Arctic Regions), Mr. Louis Sterne (the great engineer), Mr. Josiah Caldwell (a great railway magmate), Mr. Bram Stoker—Mr. Irving's manager; Mr. Charles Loveday, Mr. Irving's stage director; and Tom Ochiltree.

"There was not an unimportant or stupid man present. Depew, Dana, Irving, Butterworth, and myself, made several speeches, each. The others made speeches, not one of which was without an unusual amount of wit, humour, and wisdom. Irving told me afterwards that it was the most select and brainy assemblage that he had ever met. And every one agreed that it was the most brilliant dinner he had ever experienced. There are two other distinguished gentlemen I have omitted in the above list:—Mr. Joseph Knight—the editor of 'Notes and Queries,' and the most celebrated critic in all England,—and Mr. Joseph Hatton, the novelist.

"Since I have been in London, I have made a host of valuable friends, and laid the foundation of a most successful career here. But alas, now the foundation is well built, I have not money enough to go on with the superstructure, and so I suppose the time and money spent upon this solid foundation will be thrown away.—All I can say is, that I have tried to do what seemed wisest for the future; that I have been disappointed by those who were to complete certain arrangements and pay me money. I have been the victim of these circumstances, and am now struggling to fight my way out of a terrible dilemma to the very best of my ability. What the result will be, I will not attempt to say."

Three days after this dinner, my father had written to my mother (Sept. 8th):—"I am driven hard trying to carry through a business which promises a great deal. If it fails, I shall find myself in a strange

^{*} Of all those mentioned above as my father's guests, only one still survives in 1927. Thirty-four years after, Mr. Chauncey M. Depew, at the age of ninety-one, wrote to me (from his "Lodge" at Briarcliff Manor, N. Y., Sept. 7, 1925): "I deeply regret that I cannot recall enough of that dinner to make my contribution worth while. Irving was fine, your father brilliant. Butterworth made the most speeches, and Dana as always had the choicest use of the language. Col. Ochiltree was a disappointment, as much was expected of him and little came."

land, without money to return. I will let you know the moment things are determined.—Meantime, it would be well for you to see Mr. Alger * and see what he can and will do about my work on the philosophy. If this venture fails, I will agree to return to America and devote the whole of my time to the series of books on the philosophy of expression, until they are complete."

PETITION TO WORLD'S FAIR SHOW "PANORAMIC AND DRAMATIC ART"

On the same day (Sept. 8th) he wrote the following letter to "Hon. George R. Davis, Director General of the World's Fair, at Chicago":

"Sir, The undersigned hereby applies for two acres of space, in the grounds of the World's Fair, whereon to erect a building completely equipped for the exhibit of all the latest inventions, machinery, and appliances, connected with electricity in its practical application to Panoramic and Dramatic Art. In consideration of this grant, a plant of the greatest efficiency and a building of the most decorative character

will be erected, at my expense, upon your grounds.

"In addition, this enterprise involves the engagement of a very numerous body of Artists, Mechanics, Managers, and assistants, necessary effectually to organise and carry on the exhibition.—In view of the great expense, and risk involved, may I beg that you will grant my petition on the most reasonable terms, at your earliest possible convenience, as every day's loss of time will greatly interfere with the perfectness with which I desire to present this large and unique exhibit.

—With sincere respect, Your Obedient Servant.—Steele MacKaye."

From this application, it is evident that the full nature of his project, as a new form of theatre, is not here divulged to a Director General more familiar with static "exhibits" than with enterprises of dynamic art.

"PENNILESS—\$200,000 TO RAISE: STARVATION HERE—OR PHILOSOPHY THERE!"

"I am sending you," he wrote to my mother (Sept. 16), "certain papers which will show you what I am working at.—I am tremendously busy working my plans, so that—the moment I get news that space is allotted—the money may quickly be banked. If this scheme falls through, I must either starve here or return to work on the philosophy.*
... The following statement shows what my money chances are, as connected with this scheme:

^{*} Cf. page i, 223.—Rev. Wm. R. Alger, who in 1873 had sent my father in London tidings of financial succour in America, now once more, in 1891, in response of this message, bestirred himself to repeat his devoted services, which soon, however, were not required, owing to auspicious developments of the World's Fair project.

† Cf. footnote on page ii, 270.



SIR CHARLES WYNDHAM English Actor-Manager.



Orator and U. S. Senator; President New York Central Railroad (page 476).



CHARLES A. DANA Editor of the "New York Sun".

In his successful efforts to win British support on behalf of the World's Fair, in the Summer of 1891 (pages 297-298). ASSOCIATES OF STEELE MACKAYE AT LONDON

Plate 84. Chap. XXVII.



CHARLES FOLLEN McKim Architect; member of McKim, Mead and White (page 314).



Frederick Law Olmstead Landscape Architect; Designer of Central Park Plans, New York (page 314).



GEORGE M. PULLMAN
Founder of Pullman Car Co. (page 329).



Lyman Judson Gage Secretary of U.~S.~Treasury~(page~404).

ARTISTS AND CAPITALISTS
Associated with MacKaye's Spectatorium, Chicago, 1892—'93.

Salary \$600 per month, 22 months (from Jan. 1, '92)	\$13,200
Ten per cent of gross receipts at World's Fair during 8 months —said gross estimated to be at least \$3,000,000	000 000
Estimated profits on stock	300,000
400 per cent on \$60,000 of stock	240,000
m . 1 . 1	A
Total chance	\$553,200

"The above 10 per cent of gross receipts I get for the use of the Spectacle Pantomime which I am now writing. If the plan yields even one-third of this estimate, I shall earn enough, within the next two years, to make us independent for life, and can look forward to days of love, labour and well earned rest.

"I am struggling, with every prospect of success, to carry out this undertaking. Poor, almost penniless, as I am, it is a terrible strain. I have to appear a capitalist, with an empty purse in my pocket. No one who has not tried to perform this miracle has any idea of how severely it taxes the nerves. . . . I am trying each day to raise something on one of my plays that I may send you relief. I am heartsick with anxiety about you all. Try to eke it out a little longer. Some fine day, not far off, we may wake up and find care banished for life. This hope sustains me—and inspires me to endure and to dare with faith and good cheer. . . . Embrace all my precious ones for me; take courage into your own brave heart. God bless, comfort, and support you—and give me the strength and wit to win! In deepest love for life—and forever—Your own—S. M."

The reference here to "the Spectacle Pantomime I am now writing" concerns undoubtedly the first rough sketch of his new work on the theme of Columbus, which later he greatly developed and, associated with music, designated a "spectatorio," with the title, at first, of *The Great Discovery*.

IMMENSE "PORTABLE THEATRE, BUILT IN SECTIONS"; "AZTEC BALLETS"

This is further intimated by a typewritten prospectus, contained among the "certain papers," mentioned in the above letter. This was a prospectus of the company he was then organising, which he called the "Electric Spectacle Company," capitalised at \$500,000. Some items of the Prospectus, under heading "Property of the Company" are the following:

"Two acres in the grounds of the World's Fair of 1893, at Chicago. "A portable Theatre, with a seating capacity worth \$8,500, for each performance, at popular prices.

"A complete electrical plant for inventions applying electricity to

stage illusions, scenic, mechanical, musical and dramatic.

"A full equipment of scenery, costumes, properties and stage mecha-

nisms, for the presentation of a great spectacle, illustrating the story of Columbus and the discovery of America, with grand Spanish, Aztec and savage ballets.

"The Theatre and complete paraphernalia built to be packed in sec-

tions and transported to any city in the world.

"At the close of the Exhibition, the Theatre and Spectacle can be transported for the winter to Mexican and South American cities, all of which are interested in the story of Columbus and the discovery of America."

These plans were never carried out. The conception of his theatre rapidly altered in his mind and matured to an ideal far more comprehensive and deeply significant in his future Spectatorium. But here, in 1891, it is interesting as theatre history to note his projection of plans involving a portable theatre on a scale of great magnitude (with "seating capacity worth \$8,500 for each performance"),—built to be packed in sections and transported to any city in the world,—some twenty-five years before the quite distinct origination of a very small-scale portable playhouse in America—the "Portmanteau Theatre," invented by Stuart Walker, about 1916.

My father had now been abroad two months. He remained six weeks longer, during which, the intensity of concentration needful to conceive and lay the practical foundations for his project; the increasing stress of debt, suspense and fatigue; and the worry for those oversea who, depending upon him, were hourly awaiting news: these strains, all gnawing at the vitals of his endurance, are manifest in the following letters from him to my mother (including also one to myself):

"MADDENING SLOWNESS-WORK & WAITING-HAVE LOST 20 POUNDS

(Sept. 28, '91):—"Your letter of Sept. 17th, my poor, dear heart, deepens the helpless misery of these trying days. I cannot help the fact that everything moves with such maddening slowness in this country, nor that all my hopes and expectations have been thus far disappointed. . . . When my heart is like lead within me, and almost ready to stop from fatigue,—I have to carry a countenance radiant with hope. The fact is, we are in the midst of the darkest hours, and we have got to face the blackness with all the resignation, energy and courage we can command."

(Oct. 5):—"Well, dear woman, the work and the waiting still go on. I was terribly disappointed not to hear from you to-day—and have had a hard fight with sickening depression. Sometimes it seems as though I were on the verge of a great success, then something almost plunges me

into despair. . . . I am hard at work drawing the plans and specifications, and devising the documents, by means of which I hope to capture the confidence of certain capitalists, and launch my enterprise upon the financial sea.—The weariness this labour entails renders me unfit for correspondence. I only send you these few lines as being better, perhaps, than no word at all. There is no news yet, and I do not dare to expect—or to write of any hope. God bless, protect, comfort you all. In love without language.—S. M."

(Oct. 7):—"Another mail has arrived and yet no letter from you. Nearly ten days since I recd. a word. I am ill with anxiety. My heart aches with a frightful anguish, as I think of your horrible situation.* I have lost 20 pounds, since I have been here, from sheer worry.—My Chicago scheme moves like a snail, if it moves at all; at any moment it may take a rapid pace, or fall by the way. If affairs go through, I shall cable you to Shirley and sign my cablegram with the name of Loring, giving the name of the vessel in which I sail. No one must know I am returning. I will explain why when we meet. This secrecy is very important to my undertaking. God grant all will go well."

EXTREME ILLNESS: "TORMENTS OF TEN YEARS—LIKE A SURGEON'S KNIFE"

(Oct. 16):—"My precious son, Percy,—I have been very ill—but am better now, and hope soon to be myself again. I have really been so completely at the end of my strength in my fearful fight here, that I could not write before.—Anxiety, suspense, and hard labour have taxed my vital powers to their last limit. A colossal fortune could never adequately pay me for the long weeks of anguish through which I have passed here. If my brain had not a flinty fibre, it would have gone to pieces long ago.—I am so proud, my precious son, of all your splendid industry and your manifest fitness to do noble work in the world. I could write you volumes, but I could never tell you how I love and bless you and honour you—for the manhood you show in so many ways. God bless you!—Lovingly your father, S. M."

(Oct. 17, '91):—"Dear brave, noble woman—I have just posted a very doleful letter to dear Percy. It seems hard that my only letter to him should be such a wretched one. I feel ashamed of it, and sorry now that I have sent it.—The fact is, I am in no condition to write to any one, and only send you these few lines to tell you how much I revere you for the courage with which you face your many mental and physical trials.—I fear I shall never be of much use as a companion to you or the dear children.—If I live through the present crisis and can only turn what strength remains to me into a money value that will

^{*} In my diary, at Shirley, are these entries: "Oct. 8, '91: Paid Mr. W.—\$15, half his bill. We now possess in the world—\$1.00!" . . . "Oct. 14: Last night, we caught 2 tubs full of water from the eaves, besides what went into the cistern." . . . Our little "cottage-castle" at Shirley had no well, and all the accessories were very primitive. I used to bring drinkingwater in a large demijohn, from the town pump at the common.

secure the future of all of you from the perplexities and miseries of the past, I shall be eternally grateful, and ask no sort of earthly recom-

pense for myself.

"My personal capacity to enjoy is gone. I have been through such heart, head, and body torments, in the last ten years, that I am tired to the very core of my soul with the horrible problems of life. There are currents and eddies and whirlpools in the river of life that baffle all our sense, reason, love. We can never solve the mystery of their navigation.—When you write me of home and peace, it makes me sicker at heart than ever. Try to think of me as one already passed into the other life. Try to lose yourself in our children and forget they ever had a father. They are your real blessings. I have only been a curse to myself and every one else.—If by dying I could provide an independence for all of you, I would die the happiest man that ever surrendered the breath of life. . . . Perhaps, before this arrives, I may have sent you news that will atone for the gloom of these pages. With deathless love and unutterable blessings.—S. M."

The ten days' illness here evident in these letters was extreme. An actor friend of his, who saw him at the time in London, has told me that he visited my father at forlorn lodgings, in a small hall bedroom, where he lay in bed emaciated, apparently at death's door, and devoid of any medical aid, which, however, his friend secured for him.—On October 20th, '91, he wrote again to my mother:

"Your silence tells a story full of sorrow. I know what you are enduring, and I am sharing every worry and humiliation with you. These days are as full of torture, as though my nerves were under a surgeon's knife. Things look promising, yet hang fire with a sickening persistence.—Meantime, existence is growing more and more impossible every day."

Four days later, before this letter had arrived at the little Shirley cottage, we received there this cablegram: "City Paris, Wednesday."—Six days later, came another: "Delayed. Sail to-morrow, Umbria."

LAST MINUTE SUCCESS; BACK IN NEW YORK ORGANISING CHICAGO COMPANY "Steele MacKaye," wrote the Brooklyn Eagle, "could swing like a princely pendulum between pauperism and affluence."

The pendulum of Fortune swung now from London toward Chicago, and on Nov. 7th, '91, it paused midway at New York, whence my father, on that date, wrote home to Shirley:*

*This letter was preceded by a telegram, "Just arrived well, detained here till Friday, shall write tonight."

"Well, dear heart, I am back once more in America. I return with a prospect and with very little else. The money for my project has been positively promised, in case I can make certain arrangements here with the World's Fair Commissioners. . . . I should start immediately for Shirley, but first I have four things to accomplish here:

"1.—The organisation of the company that is to carry out my scheme

during the World's Fair.

"2.—The consummation of a contract with the Commissioners.

"3.—Securing two Trustees of high standing in the financial world, as custodians of our capital and receipts, and as protectors of those who buy our building bonds.

"4.—Obtaining guarantors for these bonds whose names shall be ac-

ceptable to our bond buyers.

"The bond buyers furnish our cash capital. The guarantors are each given an amount of stock equal to the number of bonds they guarantee. It is a very perfect financial scheme and has received the approval and endorsement of the best solicitors in England, where I have already secured bondtakers to the amount of \$200,000. . . . I am now working to organise the political, social and financial influences, which are to aid me in my endeavours to make a special contract with the World's Fair people. If I secure this contract, my entertainment will be the leading attraction of the Fair—and the only entertainment admitted into the grounds-proper of the Fair.—When I have obtained the contract, the Trustees and the Guarantors, I shall have a few weeks' rest, and then I hope to be able to spend them with you and May (Monroe), completing the book * you have been working at. . . . I need scarcely tell you that I have brought no presents for any one † . . . I did not receive money to settle up, and get away with, until a few hours before I left London.-I shall deposit for you to-morrow the \$100. ‡ . . . Take courage, and rest your heart with good hopes!"

Two more letters touch on delays which still held him from home:

(Nov. 9):-"Hitches here have forced me to send a long cable to England, costing \$20. . . . The cash expenses of organising Co. here are three times more than we calculated. Thus we are balked and delayed, when loss of time imperils our success.—The discipline inflicted upon the impecunious should prepare them for the softest situations in the regions of everlasting bliss.—I have had the most agonising experience with my tooth; had two roots dug out yesterday without gas, and am still weak with the nervous shock. I fear I shall not get to Shirley before next week. With tenderest embraces.—S. M." . . . (Nov. 10):

*On Harmonic Gymnastics, based on the notes taken by May Monroe during seven or eight years of study with my father. This book was never

† He was sorely tempted, however, to make at least one New York purchase of a home-coming gift. My diary, Nov. 13, '91, after he had reached home in Shirley, contains this item: "Father brought Hazel a ring costing

‡ On Nov. 11, '91, my diary states: "A telegram saying: 'Deposited payment

in full'-which means \$100 in the bank!!!!!!"

—"Only a moment to tell you how disgusted I am at these continual postponements. Business is the Heavy Villain of the play of life. . . . Tell dear Jack and Percy their letters were perfectly delightful to me. . . . God love you all!—S. M."

WELCOME-HOME: HOOTING "THE HEAVY VILLAIN OF LIFE"

The next day, at Shirley Common, "Mr. Cram," our Yankee Knight-Errant of telegrams, having driven from the "Village" in his buggy two miles and a half behind his Rozinante, delivered this joy-dispensing despatch:

"Shall arrive at Ayer Junction 9.30 to-morrow morning. S. M."

So, the next day (Nov. 12), for twenty-six hours, "the Heavy Villain of the play of life" was hooted from the stage of destiny, by exultant youngsters, ushering homeward their hero of *The Great Discovery* from the grimy bourne of Ayer Junction.

That day was spent in reunion, walks, talks, and a family ramble to a hill pasture overlooking Wachusett mountain. At the cottage, before late supper, I read to him—alone in my bedroom—my first blank-verse play, A Philosophic Fool, already referred to.* The next morning, in our little parlour, I read him another play of my sixteen-year-old composing—a local farce, for "neighbourhood" production at the old Town Hall—which my diary records that "he seemed to like," and then adds: "12 o'clock came—too soon!" For then "Business, the Heavy Villain" of Reality, re-entered with rapacious tread, and bore off our hero once more to the stage "wings" of imminent expectations—"on the 12.37 train." So, via New York, he went west, arriving in Chicago the next morning.—Behind him he left in my mind, an image indelibly etched, recording that day of our Shirley reunion.

A PASTURE HILLTOP AND THE APOTHEOSIS OF ART

Since that clear Indian summer day, how many sere Novembers have drifted their ochre leaves and dropped their yellowing chest-nut burs by those old upland roads! Yet how vernal with youth and zestful with scents of the great sea is the memory yet of that brave Discoverer, westward-bound on far, strange adventures! How stark—yet mystic as the dim prow of the *Pinta* against the sunset glories of Columbus' first voyage—the image of a grey boulder-stone in that wild hill-pasture, where—with one foot on its low flange—looking off toward Wachusett and the gathering sun-

^{*} On page ii, 226.

down, he told us of his colossal vision—the Spectatorium, then yet unnamed.

There, as he spoke, unrolled and uprose before us an apotheosis of the arts, religion, the burning synthesis of science, united for the self-discovery of America, as these in their austere beauty may only be hinted, but never revealed, in these pages—where inevitably there must be absent that ardour of his eyes and those fluent aspirations of his voice which held us there, thralls to wonder and to presences of ancient gods, on that dreamy hilltop of autumnal New England.



PART VI

The World-Finder

"Steele MacKaye, pioneer inventor of the theatrical world, was ever seeking for new worlds to conquer. He talked to me about many of his plans, including his Spectatorium, for the World's Fair."

THOMAS A. EDISON (1926)

"Far he sees
Beyond all present miseries
The pole-star of his age-long dreams,
And in its light he plans what seems
Most fitting; then, unswerved, he acts—
Colossal carpenter of facts."

ROBERT KEITH MACKAYE.



CHAPTER XXVIII

LAUNCHING THE SPECTATORIUM

Chicago—Shirley

Nov., '91—Sept., '92

CHICAGO: "FOUNDING AN INSTITUTION DEDICATED TO A DIVINE DUTY"



On the morning of november 15th, 1891, Steele MacKaye arrived in Chicago. There, with but few intervals of brief eastern trips, the remaining two years and three months of his life were to be spent in almost unexampled labours. Henceforth (as Moses P. Handy wrote) "he was, for once and all, to link his life with Chicago and make that city the scene of the culminating effort of his genius."

Looking back on the years of his inner thought-life, from which this outward "culminating effort" sprang,

Steele MacKaye wrote, very shortly before his death,* this brief apologia pro vita sua in arte:

"The most beneficent institutions that civilisation develops are those which aim to increase the enlightenment, to perfect the skill, or to reanimate and inspire the spirits of the humble but heroic strugglers who lay down their lives in daily drudgery for the worldly welfare of mankind.—Of these institutions none, perhaps, is more essential to the mental health of the mass than the house of their diversion, the theatre. . . . When the amusement of the multitude can be made the means whereby lives benumbed by overwork, calloused by coarse occupations, stricken by great sorrows, or deadened by the poisonous sweets of luxury, may be brought to that clear consciousness of the real worth of life which is created by the contemplation of the heroism history reveals, then indeed the temple of entertainment performs its worthiest function and attains its highest rank.

"The hope of founding an institution dedicated to this divine duty prompted me to devote the last decade of my life to an effort to invent the practical means whereby an entertainment, whose aim should be to uplift as much as to amuse, might secure the patronage of the multitude essential to its financial maintenance.—How to make the lofty and the

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^{*} In the "Introduction" to his Spectatorio, "The World Finder," produced at the Scenitorium, Chicago, Feb. 5th, 1894. He died Feb. 25th.

refined popular is an aim which seemed to me worthy the devotion of a lifetime. With the earnest desire of doing my whole artistic duty in this direction, I sought to contribute all the faculties and forces at my command to the crystallisation of this conception into the concrete form

of an established institution. . . .

"The ends I aimed at were so audacious that I did not dare, for several years,* to divulge the nature of my work, even to my most intimate friends, believing the confession of my secret would secure me only rebukes for wasting my energies on impossible dreams. Even after I had evolved certain inventions, which convinced my own judgment that I had found a practical means to the unprecedented effects I sought, I remained silent, because the cost of my project would be so great that I despaired of securing the necessary capital, unless some unexampled occasion should arrive. . . .

"The suggestion of a World's Fair, commemorating the discovery of America, was made to Congress, and the promotion of this idea resulted in securing to Chicago the possible glory of a great international task. It was not until I went to London, and came in contact with the Commission, that I realised the lofty and enlightened motives which were to rule the conduct of this colossal enterprise.—Then it was I perceived that the great occasion of my lifetime, for the possible fruition of my hopes, was at hand. With this conviction, I came to this city and, for the first time, fully revealed, to the Board of Architects of the Columbian Exposition, the daring mechanical and artistic achievements implied by the adoption of my ideas. I shall never forget that interview.

"I came into the presence of these expert, practical artists with a very fervent hope, but with very slight expectation, of recognition for my scheme. I was prepared for a forlorn fight, forced to confront the ridicule of my plans as wild, chimerical and mad. But much to my astonishment and joy, my project was welcomed by these men of genius, in words so warm, that it would ill become me to quote them. Their hearty reception of my plans enabled me speedily to arouse great interest in the enterprise."

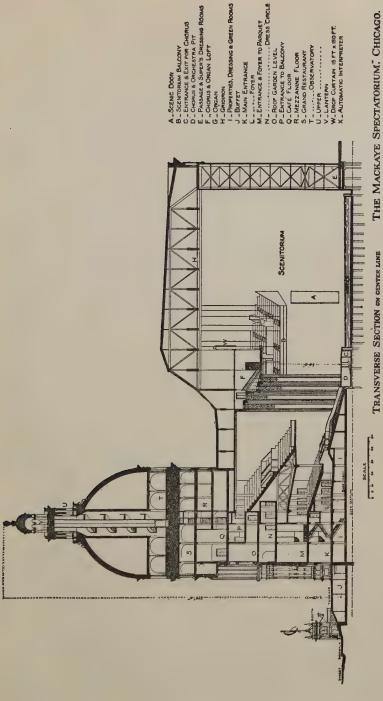
Of this "hearty reception," Moses P. Handy wrote in his article, before quoted:

"Everybody received the idea most hospitably. 'Mr. MacKaye,' said H. N. Higginbotham, President of the Exposition, when the plans in their crudest form were laid before him, 'if there were nothing else to see, the world would come to Chicago to see your performance. It is just what we have been looking for—a worthy celebration of the event which the Exposition will commemorate.'"

HIGGINBOTHAM "ENTRANCED": "SUCH A PICTURE I NEVER BEFORE BEHELD"

Two years later (after my father's death), H. N. Higgin-

^{*}Cf. the "vision of invention," glimpsed on page ii, 281.



CKAYE SPECTATORIUM, CHI

botham gave this published recountal of that meeting, when "the plans were laid before him" for the first time:

"The meeting, by appointment, was fortunately uninterrupted. It consisted of Majors Benjamin Butterworth and Moses P. Handy, who occupied seats at both ends of a large flat-top desk, Mr. Steele Mac-Kaye and myself being seated at the sides of the same table, facing each other. After preliminary introduction, my vis-à-vis (who previously, as well as his mission, was unknown to me) was requested to explain his subject.—I have many times regretted that I had not concealed a

stenographer to record that evening's conversation.

"Mr. MacKave stated that he was the originator of mechanical devices that would enable him to revolutionise all histrionic, dramatic and operatic performances.-He came to the meeting without any contrivance, neither drawing nor writing, and yet with his wonderful gifts he laid before me such a picture as I never before beheld, and probably never will again, unless on the farther shore I am privileged to renew my acquaintance with that wonderful man and ask him to do me the very great favour of repeating the performance.—His rhetoric was faultless, his sentences well chosen, not a word missed or misplaced. His facial expression added fire and meaning to his utterances; his gesticulations were timely and added precision and power to his speech. He changed his position at times, to give greater weight to his words, throwing into the picture he was creating-light and shade; depicting in quick succession—joy, sorrow, disappointment, hope, fear, doubt, and despair. The full force of all his powers was turned upon me as if I were an army to be conquered, as if an audience of thousands had to be convinced. . . . So he carried me away with him into the clouds, and I wondered how I was ever to be returned to a condition that would enable me to cope with the practical or business side of the questions involved; to boil his imagery and magnetism down to a percentage; to calculate in dollars and cents the value of it all.-I sat like one entranced, or completely hypnotised, wondering if a sane man could really conduct such a sublime performance."

"THE NOBLEST ARTISTIC SCHEME I EVER HEARD OF": FREDK. LAW OLMSTEAD; BURNHAM EAGER; MCKIM DESIGNS SPECTATORIUM AS "GRAND GATEWAY"

"Both men of art," wrote Major Handy, "and men of action agreed in homage to the work of genius.—Frederick Law Olmstead, Dean of the Board of Architects, said: 'This is the noblest artistic scheme I have ever heard of. It will be the crowning glory of the Fair, and all connected with it ought to feel deeply in debt to Mr. MacKaye for his creation. Such a conception deserves the place of honour on the Exposition grounds.'—Everybody received the idea most hospitably. The architects were sympathetic and enthusiastic.

At Mr. Daniel Burnham's request, Mr. Charles Follen McKim, the designer of the Architectural Building, drew plans for a construction, which should combine the Terminal Station and the Spectatorium as a

grand and imposing gateway to the Fair.—Another plan was to put it where the Stock Pavilion was. Then they tried to find a place for it on the Lake Front. MacKaye's own favourite site was the wooded island. But something stood in the way of every plan."

"The prospect of my scheme's prompt adoption," stated my father, "was exceedingly good, when there suddenly appeared the doubter, who never fails to arrive, wherever any movement, promising to progress in life, or art, is commenced. This doubter, while acknowledging the original character of my conception, questioned the practicability of carrying it out. So, to dissipate all doubts, I undertook the making of a model, upon a very small scale,* which would prove the mechanical feasibility of my inventions, and partially suggest the artistic value of the effects they were devised to produce. To build it required a large sum of money (\$5,000). Benjamin Butterworth and Powell Crosley, of Cincinnati, were the men who had the nerve to supply the capital for making this experimental model, at a time, too, when the project had no more tangible existence than my own verbal formulation of its mechanical means, and my description of its possible artistic results.—To make this model, I shut myself up in a shop, t where, for several months, I kept myself from most of those whom I had interested in my enterprise."

The resourceful initiative, the variety of responsibilities and the cumulative patience needful to launch so vast an undertaking, under inexorable pressure of time and vexatious obstacles of red tape—a tenacity of purpose imbued with the combined love for his work and for his family which animated all his hopes—are suggested by the excerpts of letters and telegrams from my father to my mother in Shirley, quoted in this chapter. Glancing back, these commence six days after his arrival in Chicago:

DELAYS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS; BATTLING FOR DREAMS; CONSTRUCTING PLANS AND WORKING MODELS

(Telegram, Nov. 21, '91): "Money telegraphed to-day. Every one excessively enthusiastic." . . . (Telegram, Nov. 25): "Progress provokingly slow, but apparently sure. Happy Thanksgiving to all." . . . (Auditorium Hotel, Nov. 29) "Dear one—Endless consultations—many antagonisms between heads of committees—the capricious vanity of ignorant old money bags, ‡ whose self-importance and pomposity tax one's tact and patience to the utmost—all these must be deftly dealt

^{*}A much larger scale model was constructed, in late '92 and early '93, at a reported cost of \$30,000. Also, in Feb., '94, the Scenitorium represented a model thrice as large again, at a cost of over \$50,000.

[†] An old wooden armory, at 241-39th street, corner of Vincennes Avenue.

† These were not the men of wealth who later, with rare intelligence, faith
and enthusiasm rallied to the Spectatorium, and became its official sponsors
and business directors.

with before we have won. . . . I soon discovered I could do nothing without elaborate plans—working models, clear descriptions, etc.—I have been up to my eyes in work deep into the night. An architect, a model maker and a typewriter are all at work in my room, and I keep them on the rush every instant.—In addition, I have the official visiting—social entertainment necessary to organise the influences I need to get the land * I require, at the price that will be tempting to capital.—But, even if I get my land, there is not an instant to lose in working out all the drawings and specifications with the architect of the Fair, whose inspection they must pass. . . . I embrace you, every one, with a depth of tender love no words can reveal. In haste most hateful.—S. M."

(Dec. 6th): "Nothing decided yet, though encouraging progress. The project is so vast and weighty it moves slowly. . . . I am still pegging away at working-models—plans, specifications, plots—strained to the last notch. . . . Any news of you dear ones is blessed to my tired existence.—My soul will be with you all, in Shirley, on Tuesday.† Ah!

what he might have been to me now, had he lived!"

(Undated: about mid-Dec.): "Once more, dear Heart, I must send you sad words. I can get no more money until land has been allowed me in the grounds of the World's Fair. The Ways and Means Committee have my fate in their hands, and the working models, which they demand, take time and money to produce. . . . I am working night and day. . . . Under these circumstances it is impossible for me to be with you all, Xmas,—tho' I still hope I may reach you New Year's day, with glad tidings.—This is a bitter dose of disappointment, which we must all bear bravely. . . . If I do succeed, I shall return to Shirley with splendid prospects . . . and a lump of money. So let's be jolly—like Mark Tapley! Next week I expect to have the models and plans completed, and during Xmas week to go before the committee and secure the concession which will enable me to get immediately \$1,000. With deep, deep love.—S. M."

(Dec. 19, '91): "My precious children,—We shall be forced to postpone our Xmas until after the New Year. . . . To succeed I must stay here every instant for the present. . . . I am sick at heart at this—but perhaps this sadness, during these glad holiday hours, may be the price we are to pay for deliverance from many, many cares which have burdened us in the past.—God recompense your waiting . . . after the bells have rung-in a brighter year. . . . Courage, precious hearts!—and you shall all have your rewards.—With infinite longing, Your Father." . . . (Telegram: Dec. 31, '91): "Everything progressing with

great promise. Deepest love and happy New Year!"

(Jan. 1, 1892): "My precious ones all!—In this new year may I be privileged to provide you all with greater peace than I have in the worry-ridden past. . . . I dare not hold out too strong a hope to you

* Cf. footnote on page ii, 332.

[†] That Tuesday, December 8th, was the birthday anniversary of his son, Will, who would then have been twenty-three, had he lived.



DAWN AT PALOS: DEPARTURE OF COLUMBUS' CARAVELS

"The World Finder": Act One
From a Painting by Jules Guerin, 1927
Recording his remembered impression of a scene in Steele MacKaye's Theatre-Model (1892), which Guerin, then an apprentice, assisted in constructing, under MacKaye's direction (page ii, 318).

From a Signed Watercolour by Childre Hassam, 1893.

Bused upon an architect's drawing of the design by Steele MacKaye. The foreground indicates layoun and pavilions of the World's Fair (page 392).



yet. I can only say my own hope never seemed so well justified as now. . . . I thank each and all of you infinitely for the brave, cheerful way in which you have borne the crippled Xmas, and New Year's. Ah! how my heart glories in your goodness—your loving kindness to me—your patience with my long-lasting impotence! . . . Well, well! I may soon be back among you—bringing good news. I fear it will be nearly February before those dear days come, if they come at all,—but we shall hope, and pray,—Good-bye for a little, sweet treasures!—To my inmost essence—for its eternity—lovingly yours.—S. M."

(Jan. 2): "Dear one—I posted yesterday's letter in my pocket—as usual! . . . Good news to-day! I have arranged for money for my production expenses and I telegraphed you a slice of my deliverance. May it bring to these wintry days the brightness which you deserve more than any one I know. Peace and glad hope to you and our glorious kids!" . . . (Telegrams: Jan. 7): "Telegraph immediately how you and Percy are now." —(Jan. 8): "Percy should be very careful. I dread a relapse." —(Jan. 11): "Telegraph me daily. You cannot be too careful about relapse." . . . (Jan. 11): "I write in great haste. . . Thank God Percy is better.—I am preparing for a most important meeting.—Good health guard you all!"

DEDICATION OF HIS LIFE-WORK TO HIS SON, WILL

(Jan. 22, '92): "Dear heart,—I have just moved into my office, Room No. 54, Auditorium Building, and the first words I have written therein were addressed to our glorious boy.* I enclose them for you to keep. The next lines are these hurried ones to you . . . simply to say I am too driven to say anything to the purpose now. . . . I enclose you 200 dollars, which I had hoped to carry to you, in Shirley, but business decrees otherwise. Be very careful of this—for if my scheme fails, I do not know where any more is to come from. I send it now while I have it. . . . By March first, I hope to get home to you and all our treasures.—With thoughts and benedictions beyond utterance.—S. M."

(Jan. 26): "I am grateful at Percy's improvement—and for the news of your luck in securing a servant. . . . Blessings on all my precious household! Forgive the haste of my letters, and understand how difficult it is for me to write except when I am too dead beat to do it decently. . . . Do not hope too much. The enterprise is so immense, the opposition so strong, that I may go down in the fight.—The managers here have obtained an inkling of the nature of my scheme and are terrified at its grandeur. They have combined to bully the World's Fair into refusing my petition. I consider their opposition the most positive proof of the value of my project—and am not in the least daunted by it. I feel proud of the fight, and shall make the best battle

^{*}These "first words" were the words of dedication to his son William Payson MacKaye, on the anniversary of whose death (Jan. 22, '89) this letter to my mother was written. The words of "dedication" have been quoted on page ii, 204.

I can for my rights. I may be beaten, but it won't be until the other side has received serious wounds. Remember, there is no use worrying. Worry never yet inspired or strengthened any one. Faith, and the imperial self-confidence which that begets, is the only quality to be trusted in such a struggle as mine. If I fail—I shall say—'what next?'—and plod on—wherever fate may unfold a chance.—Always in reverent love thine—S. M."

Up to this point, my father had hoped and worked to compass for his project "the place of honour on the exposition grounds," so heartily recommended by the art authorities of the World's Fair. Now, however, it became inexorably apparent—in view of the opposition of various already entrenched interests—that it was too late to compass this object rightly, as Moses P. Handy has thus indicated in his own statement, as follows: *

"It was a great disappointment to MacKaye when he found that it was too late to make the Spectatorium a part of the Exposition itself. But, with all good will to the enterprise, the Exposition Company wanted what seemed too great a share of the receipts. So the projectors had to turn elsewhere. It was at this juncture that Mr. George M. Pullman and others came to MacKaye's rescue, and—to their credit be it said—most of them stood by him to the last."

YOUNG ASSISTANTS: JULES GUERIN ON "ONE OF THEATRE'S GREATEST"

This keen disappointment at having to "turn elsewhere," and the exasperations of delay, caused by the necessity for winning over investors "from Missouri," had its compensations to the inventor, in enabling him to construct some notable theatre-art models which, in conception and perfection of execution were unprecedented in stage history.

To the making of these models, the first of which comprised six small construction units,† my father called in as his assistants several young apprentices, who afterward attained high rank as artists. Among these was Jules Guerin, who years afterward executed noble scenic designs in New York for the New Theatre, and vast decorations for the Pennsylvania Station and the Lincoln Memorial, at Washington. Recently he has written, in recollection:

"About 1892, it was my very good fortune to be associated in work with Steele MacKaye, in helping to construct the models for his Spectatorium. This association lasted several months, during which I was

^{*} Quoted, as before, from The Chicago Inter-Ocean, Feb. 27, 1894.

[†] My friend, Jules Guerin, has told me (1926) that there were six of these working-models—one for each of the six acts of my father's *Spectatorio*. The proscenium opening of each of these models was about four by three feet, in dimension.

greatly impressed with the charming characteristics of the man: his ambitions, his real, constructive art sense, his enthusiasm, and—most of all—his wonderful imagination.—Those were my boyhood days, but I distinctly remember the spell of his personality, his real magnetism. In his death the theatrical world lost one of its greatest workers."

From his memory of that time, Jules Guerin has executed (in February, 1927) a painting in watercolor, reconstructing his visual impression of a scene from one of the Spectatorium models, as designed by my father: Dawn, at Palos, just before the departure of Columbus caravels for the New World. Through the artist's cordial friendship, I am privileged to include in this chapter a reproduction of Guerin's authenticly lovely picture, rendered doubly valuable by being the work of one who was actually associated with my father in his work of constructing his models.

Another later assistant, during the autumn and winter of '92'93, was the well-known artist, Frank Russell Green, who has kindly given me, for this memoir, the following memories of his own: *

"A GRAND CONCEPTION": FRANK MILLET; F. R. GREEN ON DETAILS
OF LARGE WORKING-MODEL

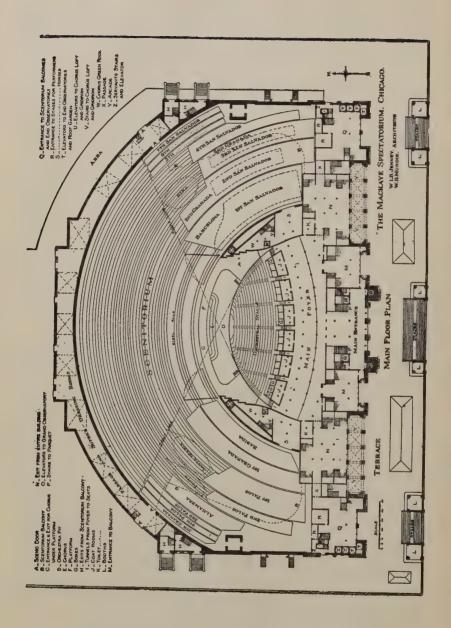
"I had the great pleasure of working intimately with your father at Chicago, in 1892-'93. I met him through my friend, Frank Millet,† then in charge of decorative work at the World's Fair. Millet was very enthusiastic about Steele MacKaye, saying the Spectatorium was a grand conception, which he would have been proud to work for, himself, if he hadn't been engaged by the Fair. . . . Your father, in the art of the theatre, was the greatest stage man, I believe, that ever was. We got along well with the model, working day and night at the armory, where he was directing its construction. Often, he would work three days at a time without sleep. I myself would work till two or three A.M., and, when I came back about ten in the morning, there I would find him still working, never having stopped.

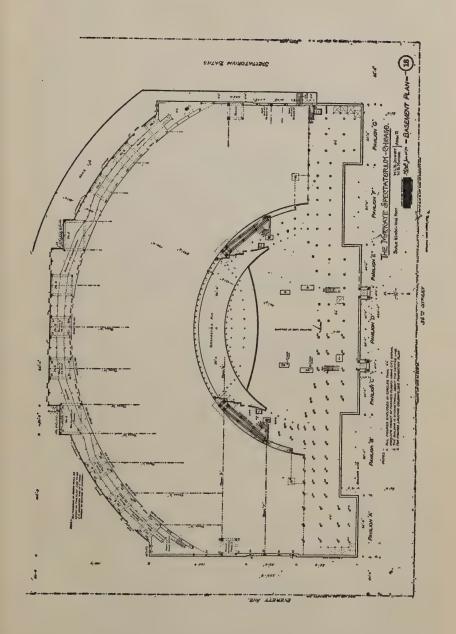
"The ground plan of the Spectatorium stage was the arc of a circle. Every seat in the auditorium was to be equally good. The proscenium opening of the large model was 15 feet wide, and 10 feet high. † The visible portion of the stage comprised 45 degrees of a circle—water, with tracks underneath for the moving stages. . . . The water container of the model was made of zinc, with a profile of glass above the

^{*} In a letter from the Salmagundi Club, New York, Oct. 30, 1924, and in an interview, there, April 4, 1925. Mr. Green's noteworthy record is given in "Who's Who in America."

[†] Frank Millet, after an eminent career in art, perished on the S. S. Titanic in April, 1912.

[‡] These dimensions are those of the later second model ('92-'93), on which F. R. Green worked, and which he here describes.





horizon line, but the immense container for the Spectatorium itself was made of concrete, curved the same as the tracks.—In the model, this glass-topped zinc container, painted darker than the horizon, came up above the water, so as to prevent the motion of the water from being seen on the horizon.—The scale of the model was about one inch to the foot. The water was five inches deep; each of the three ships of Columbus was fastened by a ball-and-socket joint to a brace fastened to a truck, which was secured to a windlass that worked in the wings.—His rainbow, projected from a stereopticon, was painted on glass, masked in with an opaque black, so as to project an arc upon the

sky cyclorama.

"Your father was quick as a flash to appreciate the work of others, when they carried out his suggestions. The first day I saw him, he was much disappointed with the sky painted on zinc; the illusion was not perfect, for the soldering lines could be detected.—Linoleum, he said, could go down under water just as well as zinc. Could I paint it for him on linoleum, and have it done in five days?—I told him I could paint it on linoleum, make a fine job, and have it finished to-morrow night.—'Splendid!' he said, put 50 dollars in my hand, told me to get a cab and rush to Marshall Field's store. So I hurried off, and brought back 18 feet of russet-coloured linoleum, hung it on the armory wall, and painted it a light grey, with Japan finish. Placed in the model, it gave a perfect illusion, through the proscenium, and pleased him very much.

SUN CYLINDER, SKY CYC, STARS, MOVING STAGES, CURTAIN OF LIGHT, ETC.

"In the La Rabida scene, he had a convent of stucco; the ground was made of linoleum, lighted by the sun, which travelled on a track overhead and descended into a glass cylinder, through which it gave all the gradations of dawn and sunset in rising and falling. In the Spectatorium, this was to be a 50,000 candle-power sun. For the model, two young men—the Robinson brothers *—helped to build this scene for him. Steele MacKaye knew the whole gamut of the artistic, dramatic, scenario-oratorio engineering, which was all brought into play in his Spectatorium production. His whole soul was to make it a great success. You can see what a grand problem he tackled in the life of Columbus, in six acts.

"First, the Convent of La Rabida, where Columbus has his vision (made visible in the sky) and the monks take him into the Convent. . . . Second, the town of Santa Fe, with the Alhambra in the distance, the meeting with Ferdinand and Isabella in the war with the Moors. (In the model, he used sponge and wool, dipped in glue-size, for the grass, etc.) . . . Third, the Port of Palos, with the three cara-

^{*} After my father's death, when the New York Hippodrome was being built, I have been informed that these Robinson brothers were engaged there in the construction of stage effects.—In his book, The American Dramatist, Montrose Moses remarks of Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium: "It is surprising how near he came to the conception of a Hippodrome."—In the light of behind-thescenes history, it is rather surprising how far (yet near) a Hippodrome came from the conception of a Spectatorium!

vels, Santa Maria, Nina and Pinta, at anchor, their farewell to the town, at sunset, with the singing of sailors from the ships. (This scene began in late afternoon; the sun went down in the glass cylinder, giving all tints through sunset to night.-Later, Frederick Archer, the Music Director, was there, observing the effects for his choral music.) . . . Fourth, the sea, with calm, storm, rainbow and starlight night. (This night sky was charted with absolute astronomical fidelity to the constellations of the southern hemisphere. These constellations were punctured in the linoleum with different sized needles, and behind each hole was an intricately wired electric bulb, covered with orange coloured paper, so that each star would actually scintillate with its true proportionate value, in accordance with nature; for your father was marvellously painstaking in every detail.) . . . Fifth, the arrival of Columbus at San Salvador in the tropics; the landing, etc.—Sixth, the Grand Fête at Barcelona on his return, etc. (For this the city architecture of Barcelona was closely reproduced. Later, he sent his assistant, Maratta, to Spain to make all kinds of special studies for the production.)

"NEVER THEATRE LIKE HIS": "BEGINNING OF MOTION PICTURES"

"When you think of the mechanical difficulties—the proscenium opening in a horizontal semi-circle—a curtain of light, invented by him, in order to change scenes—a tank of water, with panorama sky, meeting the horizon with perfect illusion—railroad tracks under water—cables to move the truck-cars (which held the scenery), operated by wind-lasses—and everything in relief, built up to cast real shadows from an electric sun—and consider that all was demonstrated to be practical: it is clear to see that there never was a theatre like his spectatorium, before

or since, nor any approach to it.

"There was many another invention and effect then used for the very first time," which I have not mentioned. Some of these have since been universally adopted, others remain unique. One of the most notable was his invention of moving isinglass cylinders for cloud effects, to these were, in some essential regards, the demonstrated beginning of motion-pictures. They were made of Prussian blue isinglass; the blue was wiped off with cotton on a brush, to make the forms of clouds which were careful studies of nature, and—when they were put in motion—the operator was instructed to throw a little out of focus.—To-day, for the Metropolitan Opera House, Kliegel now makes those moving cloud-disks, which in principle your father first invented for his Spectatorium in 1892.—If he could have lived into this age of 'the Movies,' what a great producer he would have been, with his knowledge and imagination!

"I found your father a most charming and brilliant companion. We

*"Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium," wrote Daniel Frohman (in a signed statement for this memoir), "would have borne within its walls his inventions and contrivances in stage illumination, which anticipated by many years the present system now in vogue in many houses." Cf. pages ii, 56-57, 450.

present system now in vogue in many houses." Cf. pages ii, 56-57, 450.
† These cloud-effects were produced by rotary cylinders, or drums, which were patented by Steele MacKaye, Jan. 24, 1893. Cf. reproduction of the patent

office drawings at back of this volume.

used to dine together, nearly every night, at a little restaurant on Wabash Avenue, where we had talks on many themes. He was a wonderful student of human nature, psychology, biology. Like Charles Reade, he read newspapers for suggestions of dramatic plots, for he considered 'truth stranger than fiction.' He loved to detect subtle points, yet anything naïve impressed him immensely. His fund of information was unlimited. He liked Dumas as a French dramatist. He admired The Moonstone of Wilkie Collins. He was very fond of the haunting rhythm of Poe's Annabelle Lee. Indeed he was peculiarly interested in all the works of Edgar Poe, whom I think he greatly resembled.*—Like Edwin Booth, whom he also resembled, Steele MacKaye was a great listener. He would sit quietly for hours and just listen. As a man and an artist, he was always aiming at perfection."

"ALL WE LOVE TO DO-HOWEVER DIFFICULT-GIVES DELIGHT"

This love of "aiming at perfection" he had sought to inculcate in me as a small boy, when he whittled the drumsticks that lost us both a Christmas dinner. Now, as a youth of seventeen, preparing myself to enter college, I received from him this solicitous expression of his ideas on health and education, in a letter, written to me (at Shirley) on February 25th, '92—exactly two years before the day he died, and shortly after the third anniversary of my brother Will's death. I was then recovering from an illness.

My dear, darling Percy-I stop work, to thank you over and over again for your dear letters. Your last letter tells me you were not well Sunday, and thought of writing me, but were afraid you would send me a doleful letter.-Now, my dear, dear son, remember that you must never write me, when it adds one iota of strain to your nerves. Your health is more precious than your letters, and that is saying far more than you can understand till you are the father of such a treasure as you are to me. If we can preserve your health, I am sure you will have a noble career-one full of fruits that will do good to the race and honour to those who bred you. . . . I know now the vast importance of health, especially at your time of life. My progress—at that same period of growth—would have been very different and better, if I had not been overworked by hard study † at your age. . . . I would rather you did not enter Harvard for another year, than have you enter by any forced work of your mind.—Don't worry about cramming. That's a crime almost. I don't want you to enter college until you are far in advance of the Freshman class in knowledge which you have obtained without effort. When you are eighteen or nineteen will be time enough.—If all goes well with me, in less than a year I shall be able to supply you with a tutor, who will enable you to learn as a pastime what is generally taught as a task. . . . I don't mean to recommend idleness, or surrender to any species of laziness, but only to remind you

^{*} Cf. page i, 356. † Cf. page i, 63.

that to cultivate a *love* of learning and an *enjoyment* in learning is the secret of acquiring great knowledge without mental damage. When you can convert what is work to most others into play for yourself—you will perform the miracle which will enable you easily to acquire any knowledge, and to succeed in any attainment, mental or moral.—All we *love* to do, however difficult, gives delight.—In greatest haste but deepest love, Your father—S. M."

Again, from some further letters may be gained an impression of my father's gigantic task, the varied nature of his labours and the dedicated motive behind them all.—In one letter especially (March 17th, '92), I would call attention to his clarifying ideal of the dramatic art of music, as well as to his emphasis upon American genius, in his projected school for American pantomimists, and upon creative opportunity for young American composers and directors.

That letter and a telegram of same date both specify the then young, rising musician, Walter Damrosch, whose ardent gifts of leadership and sensitive art, in the years since then, have splendidly ministrated to the musical life of America. In February, 1927, Walter Damrosch himself has written in remembrance:

"Nearly forty years is a long time, but the personality of Steele MacKaye is still as vivid to me as if only yesterday I had heard this brilliant man, discussing all manner of things artistic. He radiated a kind of seething mental activity, and this, together with a great personal charm, made him an unforgettable figure—actor, playwright, stage technician, producer, in so many ways ahead of his day. I am glad I am old enough to have known Steele MacKaye, the father, and young enough to possess the friendship of his dramatist son."

The following are excerpts of letters written by my father to my mother (chiefly at Shirley), during the winter and spring of 1892:

LONG DELAYS; "I PREFER AMERICAN GENIUS"; DAMROSCH APPROVED

(Feb. 26 *): "Dear Heart,—I have only time for a line. Everything seems to be progressing—though slowly enough to exhaust the patience of a saint. Imagine, then, the agonies of such a sinner as I, forced as I am to endure delays which threaten my scheme with ruin yet cannot be avoided by the most tireless toil. Well,—we can work and trust. I expected to have my models finished by this time—but they are only about half done. With a few exceptions, it seems impossible to get

*Sent to Norton, Mass., where my mother was then visiting Mr. and Mrs. William E. Payson. Cf. photograph of Payson in Appendix.

artists or mechanics who have skill or conscience. I push them from early morn till midnight, and then I go to pieces and to bed.—I am physically and spiritually sustained by some power that seems almost miraculous. My scheme is so noble and sublime that if it fails, the disgrace cannot be mine, but that of the country and time in which I live.—I have not strength to write more. With deepest and most deathless love,—S. M."

(March 8, '92): "Your welcome letter from Norton, with dear Hazel's enclosure, reached me yesterday. I am glad to know that you are once more in Shirley at home, for it must be a sad place without you. . . . I was very much shocked to hear of Arthur's illness. If my project goes through, I expect to give the dear boy a position where he will not be overworked and will be sure of good pay. I sent him a check for \$20, that he might take a little rest.—I wish it could have been more but I am still on the ragged edge of uncertainty."

(March 10): "I write in great haste to ask your help:

"1. Who is the best person in this country to drill large choruses of adults and children?

"2. Who is the best person to compose choral and incidental music

of a high order?

"We want to make our dramatic celebration of Columbus noble and intellectual musically, and I would prefer, if possible, to have the music the tribute of *American* genius. Get this information for me as fully and quickly as you can. This production here, on this great occasion, will afford American genius an opportunity far greater than it will have again for more than a generation.—I am driven to the last strain, as usual.—Sent Hal a birthday telegram to-day."

(March 16, '92): I stop a moment to write you, with a very heavy heart. I cannot go into details. I can only say that in spite of incessant work, and the demonstrations of the grandeur and beauty of my project. as shown by my working models, capital is obdurate and very hard to touch. It has neither patriotism, public spirit, heart, nor imagination to understand the astonishing drawing powers of my proposed production. . . . Before another thirty days, I shall have succeeded or failed. Meantime I am almost at my last cent, and must warn you to eke out as best you can, until I can gather strength for another struggle-in case I fail. If the worst arrives, I confess I shall not know what next to do for a bare living—but I suppose the hour will show the work. and I must have faith to believe that the light and strength to meet the labour will be granted when the hour comes. . . . God bless you all! How little I seem able to do, in spite of straining and striving that would kill most men-and has nearly exhausted my own astounding vitality.—Embrace our treasures, for one who loves you and them more than he will ever be able to show upon this wretched earth.—S. M." . . . (Telegram, March 16-to Percy MacKaye, on his 17th birthday): -"May each recurrence of this day find you more blessed!"

(Telegram, March 17):—"Damrosch approved.* Osgood as choral conductor excellent. His opportunity superb. Send record young composers. Shall write to-day."

"J. K. PAINE, DUDLEY BUCK; 4 COMPOSERS: ORCHESTRAL, CHORAL, INCIDENTAL, PANTOMIMIC; "REHEARSE ALL WINTER"

(March 17):—"Your happy letter has just arrived. To all its hopefulness my heart responds with most ardent amens, yet it is this very joy that frightens me; for I realise here the stupendous obstacles to be overcome, and the great chances that one penniless man like myself may fail to carry through a project which will require capital of at least a million dollars to pay its preliminary cost. The scheme is sublime, artistically. This—all acknowledge. I believe its pecuniary value equals its artistic worth. That—is far more difficult to make apparent. . . . I wrote you a very blue letter yesterday—I felt I ought, for I wanted you to be prepared for the worst. Don't think that I am discouraged. Not while I have strength to strive will I ever permit myself to be discouraged. I know how great the odds are against me, but I go ahead as though I had none at all. . . . There are three musical

departments connected with the production.

"1st The Choral-This consists of three choruses-one in a choral pulpit, of enormous size in the auditorium, where the chorus of adult voices representing the mortal and material world will sing—questioning the meaning and import of the great events, as they reach their climactic presentation upon a stage 600 feet wide, and 200 feet deep.—To these voices are wasted replies from a grand chorus, at the back of the stage behind the scenes, representing the immortal and ideal world: this proclaims in song the sadness, joy, triumph, or promise implied in the great climaxes of the spectacle.—There is still another chorus, composed only of children's voices, located high up behind the scenes, representing the angelic voices, radiating out of infinity into the vision scenes of Columbus—the dream-scenes of the future, in store for the land he discovered. These three choruses constitute my choral department, and offer opportunities for sublime effects deeply moving and unprecedented. . . . There is a second department, the Orchestral, consisting entirely of the Orchestra of 120 pieces. . . . There is still a third department, the Incidental and Pantomimic.—This consists of the music which occurs in the grand spectacle itself and forms a part of it—rendering the te deums-vesper services-masses-hymns of joy, etc.

"I need the ablest men for each of these departments. For the choral department Mr. Osgood † seems to me excellent. Obtain from him rough estimate of cost, two performances a day,—Mortal Chorus—100 voices; Ideal Chorus—200; Angelic Chorus—100 (children).

*"As a very young man," wrote Walter Damrosch, in 1925, "I knew Steele MacKaye, clever playwright, accomplished actor, marvellous stage manager. His was a fascinating personality, tingling with vitality and artistic ambitions."

† George L. Osgood, a distinguished chorus leader of Boston. He was the brother of Mrs. Lewis B. Monroe, the father of Mrs. (President) Frank Aydelotte, of Swarthmore, and an uncle of Mrs. George Grey Barnard and of Mrs. Fiske Warren.

"For the Orchestral department Mr. Damrosch* would be the very best. (Now find me a splendid man for the incidental.)—You see, the whole story is told in pantomime, with orchestral accompaniment of the action, explanatory of the sentiment of each actor as it occurs... also of the great elemental cosmic movements, presented with amazing realism by the spectacle. In addition, there is a grand overture and two great entr'acts, constituting another great musical opportunity, en tirely distinct from every other.—The choral department is a magnificent adaptation of the old Greek chorus idea—put into music. . .

"I have so much to do with the vast mechanical, scenic, costuming, pantomime, etc., that I am almost crushed by overwork. I am preparing estimates of all these, arranging for their speediest organisation, in case my project goes through.—If it does, I shall establish a school of pantomime, to be devoted to educating and training a corps of young American pantomimists. . . . In such a school, May † can co-operate

with me with the greatest glory and benefit to herself.

"I shall finish my working models this week .- These models will have cost \$5,000 when finished. I raised the money to carry them through and keep us all alive till they were done.-My weekly allowance, however, ends this week, and we have got to get along as we can until the fate of this project is decided. I think 20 days will do this. If the project goes through . . . 1894 will find me a rich man.—They are preparing to receive 500,000 strangers a day here. If we draw 5 per cent of this number, we will make from three to five millions dollars in six months. . . . Hope wisely—but not too much. Meantime, help me all you can about this musical side. . . . I need four of the best musical composers I can get for Orchestral, Choral, Incidental, and Pantomime work.—I can keep four such men busy for the next six months composing. We shall commence rehearsals next October—and rehearse all winter, giving our first performance about one year from next May. . . . Let me know all about the young men you mentionand just how to reach most favourably John K. Paine, Dudley Buck, or other gifted American composers,"

(March 18): "I write in haste to enclose you a check. This may be the last for some time.—Do let me know how long you can go, without suffering, with the last I sent.—Infinite deeps of love to you!"

"THREE AND FOUR PERFORMANCES A DAY"; CHORUSES OF STAGE

(March 30): "I have only a moment. Theodore Thomas has been engaged by the World's Fair, and has his hands full. . . . I am deeply worried about this musical matter, lest the people I need will not be available. If I could only get free to go East, now, something might be done, before too late. . . . We shall give three and sometimes four

† May Monroe, his chief pupil, who (with my brother, Will) had studied from childhood with my father.

^{*} Mr. Walter Damrosch, whose father is quoted, on page i, 256. Cf., in Chapter XXX, the photograph of Walter Damrosch, in 1891.

performances a day—and may have two sets of choruses. . . . I trust what I wrote you concerning the Delsarte matter is sufficient for your

purposes.* I am too dead tired to write more."

(Last part of March, '92): "Regarding my stage you have a wrong impression. The vast moving stages occupy great spaces on each side of my stage proper. My stage opening is only 160 feet-while my most distant chorus is placed just far enough behind the scenes to obtain the effect of mystery, which I wish to throw around the voices that are supposed to emanate from the invisible world. The chorus representing the Real is directly in the auditorium between the upper and lower galleries, while all the choruses have rising behind them immense sounding boards. . . . All my important pantomime occurs within a distance of 150 feet from the person farthest removed, and within 40 feet of those nearest.—In addition to this, my new illuminating apparatus will make my personages so conspicuous at important moments that there will be no difficulty in appreciating the pantomimic expression of the scene.—You may be sure that all difficulties of producing the grandoise Pantomime Oratorio, † as I call it-have been carefully considered, for no one realises more than I do how essential manifest practicability is to success. . . . I must now hasten back to my shop."

GEO. M. PULLMAN CALLS FOR TEN MINUTES, STAYS THREE HOURS, INVESTS \$50,000

In his "shop," at about this time, occurred his auspicious first meeting with the capitalist-projector of the Pullman car system, George M. Pullman, whose instant interest in his model, with attendant results, was thus described by my father himself, in an interview:

"The little model was the first of its kind that had ever been made. While it was in process of construction, Mr. Butterworth brought to our workshop, one Sunday afternoon, George M. Pullman, who came to stay ten minutes, and remained three hours.—The instantaneous way in which he seemed to grasp the audacity of the idea, and the practicality of its mechanical means, was as surprising as it was inspiring. With others, it had been a matter of days or weeks to secure their confidence. With Mr. Pullman it was a question only of minutes. At once, without hesitation, he declared his readiness to back the undertaking to the amount of \$50,000, himself, and also to indorse the project to any others whom I might refer to him."

"Mr. Pullman, in particular," wrote Moses P. Handy, "was constant in his faith and friendship. His words to MacKaye in the beginning were: 'I would rather lose the \$50,000 which I put in this enterprise, and have you make a great artistic success, than get my \$50,000 back

^{*} Cf. pages ii, 270, 271.

[†] For this new art he had not yet coined the word, Spectatorio.

with 100 per cent in dividends, and have any production unworthy of you, of Chicago, and of the occasion."

HALF MILLION PLEDGED; ROBERT REID ON MACKAYE'S "PICTURE-OF-MOTION IN THE ROUND"

Backed by this thoroughgoing interest of Pullman, my father soon kindled the great enthusiasm of other Middle-western capitalists (Lyman J. Gage, A. C. McClurg, Murray Nelson, P. E. Studebaker, McVickers, etc.), on the occasion of a notable banquet, given to the artists of the Exposition by the Chicago Chamber of Commerce, who invited my father to set forth to them his ideas for the Spectatorium project.—Of this occasion I have often been told by persons who heard my father speak then, and by many others who heard of it from those. I also heard of it briefly from my father's own lips. In the vividness and sincerity of these accounts, even after the lapse of twenty and thirty years, the impression made upon them by my father's eloquence has unfailingly been stated by my informers * as being among the most profoundly memorable in their lives.

Rising at this banquet, before a company comprising the shrewdest representatives of "hard-headed" American business men, magnates who commanded a total of billions at their behest, the penniless conceiver of the Spectatorium quietly set forth the practicability of his so-called "impractical" dreams. This he did with such imaginative intensity and conviction of expert knowledge, such charm of self-faith and foresight of altruistic ends, that the contagion of his sincerity conjured an ennobling spirit which involved them all in "the Great Discovery" of a vaster America in art, transfiguring the dreams of commerce—and swept them to their feet with an ovation, wherein half a million dollars was then and there pledged in tribute to a superdream of Columbus, revealed there by the artist who addressed them.—Present at that banquet was the American painter, Robert Reid, then on the threshold of his distinguished career. In 1926, he has written for this memoir:

"I had gone to Chicago as the youngest of eight painters to decorate one of the eight domes of the Liberal Arts Building. Among the great experiences of that time, I cherish the vivid memory of the banquet where I first saw and heard Steele MacKaye. On that occasion I sat

^{*}Kenneth Y. Alling, of Rochester, my father's first cousin, has informed me that Edward Brewster (one of the investors) said to him: "Thirteen rich capitalists sat down to table with Steele MacKaye, every one of whom was determined not to invest in the Spectatorium, but they all did."—Mr. Ernest Albert, of the National Arts Club, has told me likewise (1927).

between P. D. Armour and N. K. Fairbanks, two of the 'great ones' of finance.—I shall never forget the effect of Steele MacKaye's astonishing personality—how he swayed that audience of millionaires and the captains of world-industry. By sheer force of his eloquent magnetism, he drew from them not only cheers and applause but promises of hundreds of thousands of dollars for the foundation of his great scheme.

"That occasion was described by Frank Millet-the moving spirit of the fine arts at the Exposition—as unique in the history of the world. Not even in Venice, at her height of glory as a Republic, had the great monied interests given any comparable banquet to artists as their guests. Among those American artists, Steele MacKaye clearly set forth his tremendous vision, which was in essence the birth of the modern art of the motion picture—only it was a picture-of-motion done in the round, to the life,—an actual 'movie,' not a photograph. No other has ever done it, as he then set it forth with his colossal imagination and proved it with his working models."

The first showings of these working models to individual visitors at his shop, preparatory to the crucial official showing for investors, are referred to in these words of my father, written home to my mother:

\$5,000 MODELS COMPLETED: "WILD EXCLAMATIONS OF DELIGHT": COLUMBIAN CELEBRATION CO.; "PERMANENT INSTITUTION"

(April 9?): "I enclose my latest prospectus. Gen. Butterworth, former commissioner of patents, is my partner and is getting out my patents.* Everything drags.-Meantime every plan and specification is in progress toward completion, so that a day will not be lost when we have the money to begin. It is no easy job to raise \$850,000. . . . I am busy exhibiting my models, which call forth wild exclamations of delight. These exhibitions, with raising money and making contracts, keep me on the stretch every moment. If all goes right, we will have enough to help make a very pleasant wedding for our boy.† I shall be forced to stay here till almost the wedding day-but I will run on to Cincinnati and meet you there." . . . (April 11): "I cannot make any advances, nor reveal any of my ideas, to any composers or musicians. until the capital has been completely subscribed to carry the project through. I still hope this by the 18th of May. My models have produced a sensation with the few permitted to see them. I trust before long you and the children will see them. In my usual hot haste-S. M." . . . (April 16, '92): "Only a line to say that I am in the last throes of my struggle. I am on the verge of a great victory or a crushing defeat. One week from to-day I give the final exhibition to the capitalists, whose decision determines the use or vanity of all my efforts. . . . I have lost

† His son Harold, who was married, on June 2, 1892, to Miss Helen Lyle Lane, of Cincinnati.

^{*} Among other records of his inventions, on March 6, 1892, is dated a specification chart, drawn by my father, of an invention by him, entitled: "MacKaye's Air-Ship."

over 20 pounds in this fight. . . . With a glimmer of hope I can fight forever."

In his statement,* already quoted, concerning these times, my father wrote further:

"The day at last arrived when, in spite of all sorts of petty obstacles growing out of the entirely novel nature of my project, I succeeded in completing my model. Those primarily interested in promoting the project were given the first sight of the effects obtained by my inventions. These gentlemen, taken completely by surprise, declared that, until then, they had never realised the full value of my proposed production.—The model demonstrated the practicability of my inventions so positively that it enabled me, in a very short time, to capture the confidence of capitalists, and led speedily to the incorporation of the Columbian Celebration Company.—This corporation was given its name. because the Columbian Celebration Company aspired to round out and complete the work of the Columbian Exposition Company by celebrating, grandly, the great discovery which the Exposition was intended to commemorate. The more thoroughly its officers investigated the character, the purposes and the prospects of the Spectatorium, the more they became convinced that it should not serve merely a passing use, but should become a permanent institution of art in this city. . . . Inspired by this conviction, the Company ceased all negotiations for the place of honour, which the Board of Architects had determined was the due of this enterprise, and proceeded at once to secure a site just outside the Fair grounds upon the lake shore, where it commenced the erection of the immense structure designed for its purposes." †

ROOF GARDENS, RESTAURANTS, ETC.; MACKAYE'S SIMPLER PLAN OVERRULED

This statement is very significant of the policy which soon led to the expenditure—for a building intended to last for generations—of a sum vastly greater than would have been needed to build a temporary structure of stucco, like the buildings inside the World's Fair grounds. In thus adopting a site outside the grounds, my father himself desired a more modest structure than his investors preferred, as mentioned in this statement, written to me by Frank Russell Green:

^{*}Cf. pages ii, 311, 312.
†The land finally secured for the Spectatorium was situated just outside the Fair Grounds on the North end of Jackson Park, on the lake shore. It occupied a site from 1 to 27 East 56th St., corner of Everett Ave., directly opposite the still-standing Field Museum. To secure this site, my father told me, he had to get it out of a tangled legal litigation between two long-standing bitter enemies. To do this, he brought the two antagonists together at a luncheon, reconciled them and obtained their mutual consent to sell the land.

—350 feet of the lake were reclaimed from the lake by being filled in.

"I was at the demonstration of the model, when the first money was subscribed, and my great regret was that they did not let your father go on, and give the production in the more modest way which he desired * and as it was most practical to do.—Indeed, the Company went at it with an expansive and ornate design in architecture, as they saw chances for letting out concessions for restaurants, roof gardens, etc."

This statement by Mr. Green emphasises another important factor which conduced to the final catastrophe of the Spectatorium. The "moral" of it for this memoir is significant.

Steele MacKaye saw clearly that this new form of theatre and production were in themselves the essential and truly practical elements of success, and urged the building of a structure embodying only these elements, as being all-sufficient and far less costly than a structure which should add to these other extraneous elements.—But to "experienced" business men the accessories of restaurants, roof garden, office, elevators, etc., though implying enormous extra expense, appeared less "visionary" and more "practical," and MacKaye's advice was overruled. In consequence the margin of available money, during the great panic of '93, was far expended—as would not have been the case, had the advice of the artist "visionary" been heeded.

What my father, in his letter of April 16th, '92, had considered "the last throes of his struggle," though successful in "capturing the capitalists," proved but the taking of a redoubt in the interminable battle before him. During the five succeeding months, culminating in a great momentary victory, the storm and calm, the "shine and shadow" of his brave, unceasing generalship are manifest again between the lines of the following letters and telegrams, from Chicago, to his wife and family in the far-away New England cottage. From week to week, during two years, he longed to be able to have us join him at the scene of his work, but—except for very brief intervals—the financial strain precluded this, as is sufficiently obvious throughout the following pages.

MONTHS OF FINANCIAL DELAY; "DISTRACTED AND ILL"

(April 21):—"Precious Hazel—A thousand blessings on your dear head for your constant love and prayers. . . . I have only time to send a few words to my treasures at home, and this time it will be through you. Hug your dear mother for her welcome letter to me. Tell one and all that my models have produced a great sensation, and everything

* Among my father's papers is an early design of his for the Spectatorium, including only the theatre proper, without restaurants, etc., as preferred by

seems moving on to victory. . . . I am very proud of your prize, and glad you like your teacher. . . . Don't hate practising; remember it is noble to do what you don't like to do, when it is best to be done. . . . Ah! my darling daughter—I must have seemed often a bad, ungrateful papa, for not replying to your sweet letters more promptly. But some day you will know I none the less loved you with a love that millions of volumes could never begin to express.—Good-bye for a little, my comfort and joy! God grant I may be among you all before long. Give my love to that precious rascal Ben, to whom I send a special hug. With benedictions that outpace the pulses of my heart, Your father,—S. M." . . . (Telegram, April 25, '92):—"Everything promising; decision delayed two weeks; * every one amazed at models." . . . (Telegram, May 4):—"Prospects brilliant; progress slow. Too driven to write."

(May 12, '92): "Dear Heart, The enterprise still drags, with hesitating, vacillating capitalists. These delays, however, are not causing delays in preparations for building or producing. My architects are busy night and day on the final plans and specifications. I am also organising my spectacular, choral-mechanical, and managerial corps of assistants; so, by the time the money is subscribed, we shall be ready to advance with a rush. . . . I am expecting every moment to raise money enough to relieve us from present pressure. . . . I hope for a free week to return to Shirley and my treasures. Meantime I hold you all close to the heart of hearts of—S. M."

(May 17): "I have only a moment to send you a few words, and a check. There is nothing new. The enterprise is suffering from delays which wait upon all great projects. I suppose they will end soon. before it will be too late to carry the wonderful scheme through. . . . I hope health and liberty will permit me to be at dear Hal's wedding. If any effort of a worn-out man can avail, I shall be there."... (Telegram, May 18): "Shall try to reach Shirley Wednesday next. Will telegraph later." . . . (Telegram, May 23): "Impossible escape business. Meet you Cincinnati.† Shall send another check Wednesday." . . . (May 25): "The delays are sickening. To explain all would require reams of paper, and I am too chronically fatigued to fill a page.-Genl. Butterworth was obliged to leave for Washington and I could not get away, while he was gone, without great risk. Whether I shall be able to return with you from Cincinnati to Shirley is very uncertain. I must not neglect for an hour our whole future.--If I can make enough to free all your lives from the miseries of the past to you and me, I shall be con-

* At this juncture, the mother of George M. Pullman died, causing much

delay in the financial organisation.

[†] On June first, he met my mother at Cincinnati, and attended there, the next day, the wedding of his son, Harold.—On her way back to Shirley, Mass., my mother visited, at Rochester, my great-aunt, Mrs. Sarah Alling (eldest sister of Col. MacKaye) and her children, Kenneth and Millicent Alling. Cf. pages ii, 61, 62.

tent to bid old earth farewell. . . . Will Payson is here. I routed him out of his bed at seven o'clock this morning—to show him everything."

(June 19th):-"Dear one, your levely letter from Rochester has just reached me. I suppose you are now in Shirley-in other words in Heaven! Oh, that I were there with you! . . . I have written to Aunt Sarah, trying in my awkward way to thank her for her kindness to you. Your debts are mine, but your sweet soul can pay them so much better than I. . . . It is the same old story here. In my endeavours to get my enterprise into the hands of the millionaires, I have lost much time. These favourites of fortune take their time, no matter what torture of creative substance the loss of time may cause.—All seems to go well, yet I am wild with delays. I have driven architects and mechanical engineers as though all were settled. In this way, I have saved time for the practical consummation, although I have risked incurring thousands of dollars of debts in doing it .- In no other way, was the carrying out of the project to be made possible. Everything is still uncertain, though every one agrees it would be a disgrace to Chicago for my scheme to fail. . . . Meantime, I adore you and ours. As always—au fond—S. M." . . . (June 26): "Dear precious, hard-tried heart,— Your letter notifying me that my check to you for \$150 has been protested fills me with dismay and amazement. I cannot understand it. I shall send to-morrow to bank, and leave nothing undone to raise the money at once. . . . Gen. Butterworth has just come in. He has promised the money to meet the check by Tuesday at latest. . . . Everything is still in statu quo.—The strain and anxiety of these days is eating my heart out.—I am dreadfully shocked about the check, for I realise all that means of worry and humiliation to you.-Dear Percy! Thank God, you have him with you to help you bear your burdens. I shall wire you the instant I know when I can start for Shirley.—My tenderest love !-- S. M."

(June 27, '92): "My heart aches with anguish when I think of all your trials, but I am so little able to help sometimes, that I am overwhelmed with self-contempt at my uselessness.—Butterworth has disappointed me; therefore I am able to send you a check for \$100—and no more. . . . The delays occasioned by Mr. Pullman * have brought both Butterworth and myself to the last extremity. I am distracted and ill with anxiety. Why the cord of my life has not long since snapped is a mystery to me. Well—we must bear and hope—and cursed be the Omnipotence that forgets our endurance, or disappoints our unselfish hope! . . . I will write again soon. All my life is in my love of you and ours.—S. M." . . . (Telegram, July 5):—"Use last check at home. All my patents are granted."

(July 5): "I wired you to-day to use my last check of \$100 certified for your needs. The check that was protested for \$150 has been paid by the bank here, so all your checks against that will be honoured.

^{*} Cf. footnote on page ii, 334.

-Be as careful as you can, for I am left without a dollar. I never was in a worse strait. . . . These delays have made my situation desperate, and I don't know yet how soon they will end.—I am ill to the very core. My heart is like lead, yet I am forced to carry the confident countenance of great success. The strain no pen can picture-no mind imagine—that has not passed through the same experiences. We must all be prepared for the worst. . . . I don't want to depress-but it is necessary to forewarn you-now I am battling the impression here that it is already too late to get ready in time for the Fair. It is too long a story to detail. I can only say this uncertainty will soon end, for better-or for worse. I fear the latter. What are we to do then?-I confess I cannot now imagine. . . . In deepest longing, with a very heavy heart,-S. M."

"COMPANY TRIUMPHANTLY LAUNCHED"; "CROWNING GLORY OF WORLD'S FAIR"

(Telegram, July 6): "Company triumphantly launched. Don't mind yesterday's letter. Future prospects superb. . . . (Telegram, July 9):- "Everything going splendidly. Enterprise assured now. Too driven to write. Shall send check Monday." . . . (Telegram, on my mother's 47th birthday—July 11, '92):—"Many returns, each increasing in joy! Fifty thousand dollars of stock assigned you to-day."

(July 15, '92 *): "Dear Heart,-Just a hasty word to reassure you. -1st. The music will be all right, for it is in good hands. I cannot write particulars now.-2. The judgments against me do not amount to \$3,000. I shall pay every debt I have in the world, and yet be rich -if all goes as it now promises.-3. I am more driven than ever. No one can help me now. All depends on my own ability and strength.-4. I am astoundingly well, considering the strain. The Beneficent is with me, for the sake of the angels entrusted to my care. In their name I cannot fail.—S. M."

He was then in the midst of securing the last required subscriptions to the bonds required to launch the Spectatorium financially. By about the middle of August, 1892, this subscription list was so nearly completed that it was considered safe, by the Director of the Company, Henry E. Weaver, to announce the plans of the enterprise to the press. Consequently, this first public statement appeared in the Chicago Times: +

cerning the Spectatorium, this announcement is here quoted at length as a

matter of historical record.

^{*} In August, '92, he despatched to her, in Shirley, the following telegrams:-"In August, '92, he despatched to her, in Shirley, the following telegrams:—
(Aug. 1):—"All goes well. Work and weather make writing impossible."
(Aug. 13):—"Am well, but overwhelmed with work. Shall write Monday."
(Aug. 22):—"Cannot reach Shirley this week. Shall write Hazel. Telegraph me date of Aunt Sadie's birthday." (This date he wished in order to assign to "Aunt Sadie" some Spectatorium stock for her birthday. He did so later, but her birthday had already occurred, on July 18th.)
† Being the first of many hundreds of subsequent newspaper notices con-

"BIG THING FOR THE FAIR

"Steele MacKaye's 'Spectatorio'—'The Great Discovery'

"Plan by which the Discovery of America will be Commemorated with a Theatrical Innovation—Promises to be the Crowning Feature of Chicago's Year of Wonders—Mr. Higginbotham Thinks It Alone Would be Enough to Draw the Crowds Expected in the City Next Year.—Steele MacKaye's Great Scheme.

"'A Spectatorium,' says Mr. MacKave, 'is an entirely new species of building, invented and devised for the production of a new order of entertainment entitled a spectatorio. For the proper presentation of a spectatorio a large number of inventions have been made by myself, which are the result of twenty-five years of study and experience in my profession, as playwright and stage director. These inventions have been allowed by the United States patent office, and we are now taking measures to secure the foreign patents. . . . A spectatorio combines grand spectacle with grand oratorio, utilising the most advanced artistic realism for the purpose of emphasising the most inspiring idealism. It seeks to present the facts of history with graphic force while suggesting, by music and poetic symbolism, the true philosophy of history. . . . The project has obtained the indorsement of such gentlemen as Frederick Law Olmstead, Daniel H. Burnham, and his corps of architects, Archbishop Ireland, Bishop Fallows, the Rev. F. W. Gunsaulus, Mr. and Mrs. George M. Pullman, Mrs. Potter Palmer, Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Lawrence, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Henrotin, Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Baker, Director-General Davis of the World's Fair, H. N. Higginbotham, Promotor-General Handy, Senator Farwell, and many others of the same social rank.'

"Director Henry E. Weaver, a stockholder of the Spectatorium, was asked about the proposed plan. He said:- 'About three weeks ago, at a dinner of the Union League Club, the Spectatorium was brought to our attention by the Hon. Benjamin Butterworth. On that occasion George M. Pullman and Lyman J. Gage, both of whom had investigated every detail of Mr. MacKaye's creation, indorsed his project so emphaticly that I was very much astonished.—Knowing both these gentlemen to be conservative in all ventures, I was so impressed by their unreserved indorsement that I determined to investigate for myself. I thereupon viewed the model of Mr. MacKaye's project, and went into all the details of its business and artistic sides. The result is my conviction that this enterprise will prove the chief feature and the most profitable investment of the Fair of 1893.-Mr. Higginbotham, though not an investor, is another very strong believer in the project. When it was first presented to him, he said to those present at his house: 'Gentlemen, if Chicago had no other attractions than this, it would be enough to draw the crowds we expect here in 1893.' . . . Its artistic recognition commends it equally to all interested in the intellectual side of the Columbian Exposition. When Mr. MacKaye laid his plans before the board of architects, Frederick Law Olmstead, dean of the guild, rose and said with deep feeling: 'This is the noblest scheme of which I have ever heard. It is the one great thing we have been waiting for. It will be the crowning glory of the World's Fair, and all connected with the Exposition ought to feel deeply in debt to Mr. MacKaye for his creation.'

ARCHBISHOP IRELAND AND BISHOP FALLOWS WELCOME "NOBLEST OF CO-LABOURERS"

"'Mr. Olmstead's sentiments were unanimously echoed by all present. As to Mr. MacKaye's production to be given at the Spectatorium, it has received enthusiastic recognition from clergymen of all denominations. Archibishop Ireland, Bishop Fallows, and Mr. Gunsaulas have declared that the whole church world will welcome the Spectatorium as the noblest of co-labourers in the field of public education;—while one of the principal managers of "the Greatest Show on Earth," * has declared that "the performance at the Spectatorium will transcend in realism, magnitude, and variety of interest, any entertainment that has ever

been offered the public, at any time in any part of the world."

"'Among the shrewdest of our business men, the following are a few who have already subscribed for the bonds: Mr. Pullman started the subscription with \$50,000. Others who have subscribed are:—Lyman J. Gage, A. C. McClurg, Murray Nelson, Edward B. Butler, Edwin L. Lobdell, Henry E. Weaver, Clarence I. Peck, Edson Keith, J. Foster Rhodes, E. H. Phelps, B. A. Eckhart, W. L. B. Jenny, Robert Stuart S. H. Velie, H. H. Getty, B. W. Kendall, Charles W. Fullerton, J. O. Hinckley, P. E. Studebaker, Franklin H. Head, E. W. Gillett, Edward L. Brewster, Charles H. Deere, Ferd. W. Peck, J. J. Mitchell, Andrew McNally, L. W. Bodman, H. E. Bucklen, Marshall Field, Arthur Dixon, George A. Fuller, William Kent, William D. Marsh, F. D. Gray, J. W. Porter, F. G. Logan, Anthony Schmidt, R. T. Whelpley.'"

Thus, at last, on the 24th of August, the first great milestone of my father's long strivings was attained, and characteristicly he rushed to the telegraph office and wired to Shirley this greeting for his little daughter, Hazel, on her twelfth birthday:

"Last subscription made to-day. All money raised for grand project. Uncertainty ended on your dear birthday. May each anniversary bring you increase of happiness!—Father."

"My precious little daughter," he wrote, on the same date, "what a glorious celebration of your birthday we have had to-day! The last subscription for the bonds of the company, which gave us the legal right to call for our money, begin to erect our building, and go on with our other work, was made to-day;—so that your birthday will be forever associated with the actual beginnings of the efforts, which are to carry

^{*} The circus organisation founded by P. T. Barnum.

out the colossal work of art created by your father. Thus you and I are drawn closer together by one unity in history; for this creation will form a part of history, that will be well remembered a hundred years hence, when Americans again celebrate the discovery of America by Columbus. . . . This is an infinitely sweet thought to me. Hug and kiss all our dear ones at home. God bless each and every one of you!— It is a great grief to me to be away from you to-day. If it had been possible, I should be at your side now; but if I had deserted my post for an instant, all that I have worked for so long might have been lost. Now I must stay here till every department of this vast enterprise has been organised and set in motion. Then, perhaps, I shall be able to get away and spend a few days with you at Shirley.—When we meet, we will plan for the future, with the hope that we may never again be separated so long. Hold Mama to your heart, and try to hear mine beating in unison with yours and hers.—With deeper love than the greatest genius could reveal in words,—your father—Steele MacKaye."

AUG. 29: "WE BEGIN TO DIG FOUNDATIONS"; ARTISTS SENT TO SPAIN

(Aug. 29): "Dear Heart (he wrote to my mother), you have no idea how I am driven, now matters are decided; the Departments to organise and set in motion—all the while hampered by red tape of a corporation—all this keeps me strained, night and day, to the last notch. How I endure it, and live, is forever a mystery to me. I answer some

of your questions:

1. We can give Jack all he will need to continue his studies at Harvard, without handicap of other work. . . . 2.—Can't decide about Percy until I reach Shirley, I hope by middle Sept. . . . 3.—Save all the old furniture associated with our precious Will's old home. Store it, or bring it to Shirley, as you think best.* . . . I shall have a salary, not yet decided on. We have to wait ten days, for the money to come in from our subscribers, before many matters can be decided.—We begin to dig our foundations this week! To-morrow our artist, Maratta, goes to Spain, for exact data regarding La Rabida, Palos, Grenada, Santa Fe and Barcelona.—Next week, our musical manager, Mr. Frederick Archer, goes to Europe, for all information required for the archeological side of our production .- Don't worry. Nothing will be neglected. Every department is in the best hands obtainable. We must work, and trust. . . . I enclose check for Hazel's birthday, which I forgot to enclose in my letter to her .- Love deep as space and pure as light to you all!-S. M."

"We begin to dig our foundations this week!"—Despite, then, a thousand forecasts of failure, and because of ten thousand tenacities on the part of "that rare figure—a captain," the leviathan of his dreams was now launched, with golden promise, on the deep lake-waters of Chicago Capital, where a new "great Western" of

* On Sept. 6, '92, my mother went to New York, where she arranged for the moving to Shirley of our heavier furniture which had been in storage since 1888. the argosies of art was about to rear its proud masts and spars in lake-shore building yards of the middle-western metropolis.

"In order to secure the capital for the consummation of this project," stated my father,* "eight hundred \$1000 first-mortgage bonds were issued by the Company.† Of this number, five hundred were sold during the summer of 1892.—With the disposal of this number, the sale of the bonds was stopped, and the remaining three hundred were withdrawn from the market by the Board of Trustees, at the suggestion of the managing director t of the Company who very naturally believed that \$500,000 would meet all the necessities of the Company for many months, and might possibly prove sufficient to carry the enterprise to an opening. At that time, the whole country was enjoying the most unexampled prosperity. No one could foresee that, within six months, the business world would be in a state of financial paralysis which would render it almost impossible to dispose of even the gilt-edged securities of the nation itself .- With a capital of \$500,000, therefore, the Columbian Celebration Company proceeded to erect the Spectatorium."

In the heart-lightening sense of that achieved security, my father at last hastened home to Shirley, for respite of brief reunion with his family, so long anticipated by us all. Before him flew these three telegrams:

(Chicago, Sept. 12):-"Cannot reach Shirley before next week. Have Jack there then." . . . (Chicago, Sept. 17):- "Just leaving for New York. Will wire there when arriving Shirley." . . . (New York, Sept. 19):-- "Start Boston to-night. Shall take nine-thirty train tomorrow morning from there."

SHIRLEY-HILLTOP REUNION: PASTURES OLD AND VISIONS NEW

So, on the morning of September 20th, 1892, he was once more reunited with his wife and children and our "Aunt Sadie" at the little Shirley cottage. Ten months before (Nov. 13, '91), having just returned from London, he had left us, to begin his battle at Chicago, hoping then to rejoin us very shortly, for our Christmas reunion. Then his mighty project was only an alluring prospect; now it appeared a certainty, with solid foundations.

And now that ten months' interval of mutual longings and interminable suspense was compensated by a timeless moment of harvested fruitions and of radiant expectations-"in the highlands of his heart": for at last he, too, was "in Shirley-in other words, in Heaven!"

^{*} His statement of Feb. 5, '94 quoted also on pages ii, 311, 312, 346-348. † The company itself was capitalised for \$1,200,000. † Mr. Murray Nelson, of Chicago.

There, once again, on a sky-clear afternoon of autumn, we stood together by the old grey boulder on the tranquil hilltop of the year before, overdreaming far Wachusett across the golden pastures, and looked newly in one another's faces, and saw there in his eyes, for us all, the kindling radiance of a life motive—"deep as space and pure as light."

CHAPTER XXIX

"THE GREAT DISCOVERY"

Chicago (and New York)

Oct., '92-Feb., '93

OCT.21: 400TH ANNIVERSARY COLUMBUS' DISCOVERY: NEW WORLD FESTIVAL

The life-motive of the great dreamer, with the commemoration of whose vast discovery my father's life was now linked in dedicated labours, was acclaimed that autumn throughout the new world with a measure till then unparallelled.—On October 21, 1892, by proclamation of the President of the United States, the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus * was celebrated by the entire people, from the great cities to the farthest hamlets of the nation. Focusing the spirit of these myriad festivals in one centre of international communion was the World's Fair, at Chicago, where the visionary "White City," already half risen on the shore of Lake Mchigan, glittered in the radiance of "fifteen thousand rockets shot at once into the night zenith," as it received its formal dedication,—prophetic of its actual opening, as an Exposition, on May Day of the following year.†

On the imposing occasion of that dedication, Col. Henry Watterson was official orator of the great afternoon conclave, at which Director-General of the Exposition, Davis, presided. Vice-President of the United States, Levi P. Morton, representing President Harrison, read the President's proclamation, dedicating the Exposition. Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" from The Messiah, was sung by many choral voices. The distinguished "Columbian Ode" of Harriet Monroe ‡ was read, and a laurel wealth presented to the young poet by the Vice President. Cardinal Gibbons, in his scarlet robes, spoke the dedication prayer.—In the midst of this brilliant assemblage, representing all world nations, Col. Watterson rose and commenced his oration by this apostrophe to the Spectatorium:

† This six months' postponement of the Fair's opening was made necessary by the vast scale of preparations, which were not begun early enough to open on the historic date itself.

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^{*} About two decades later, the birthday of Columbus, Oct. 12, was first proclaimed a national holiday in the United States; and in 1925 in Italy.

[†] Miss Harriet Monroe, now editor of *Poetry*, has written me (1926): "That dedication ceremony was magnificent. I have never seen a spectacle to compare with it.—The grand project of your brilliant father, described in Henry Watterson's speech, could it have been realised, would have affected profoundly the history of spectacular art in this country."

HENRY WATTERSON, OFFICIAL ORATOR, EULOGISES SPECTATORIUM

"Among the wonders of creative genius in course of preparation for this festival of the nations will presently be witnessed, on the margin of our inter-ocean, a Spectatorium,—wherein the Columbian epic will be told with effects surpassing the most splendid and impressive achievements of the modern stage. . . . No one, who has had the good fortune to see the models of this extraordinary work of art, can have failed to be moved by the union which it embodies of the antique in history with the current in life and thought, as, beginning with the weary mendicant, fainting upon the hillside of Santa Rabida, it traces the strange adventures of the Genoese seer—through weary watches of the night whose sentinel stars seem set to mock, not to guide; across shoreless wastes of mystic sea, spread day by day to bear on its rise and fall the death of fair, fond hopes, the birth of fantastic fears:—that peerless and thrilling revelation, and all that has followed to the very moment that beholds us, citizens, freemen, equal sharers in the miracle of American civilisation and development.

"Amid this universal celebration, this jubilee of mankind, I am appalled when I reflect upon the portent of the proclamation, which has been delivered in our presence.—Who shall measure the canvas, or blend the colours, that are to bring to the mind's eye of the present the scenes of the past in American glory? Who shall dare attempt to summon the dead to life, and out of the tomb of the ages recall the tones of the martyrs and heroes, whose voices, though silent forever, still speak to us—in all that we are as a nation, in all that we do as men and

women?"

There is a rhythm of old southern statesman oratory in these passages of "Marse Henry" of Louisville, who himself had once been nearly nominated as Democratic candidate for Vice President. There is antique rhetoric in his "periods," but in their essence there is vivid reality—a present reality for this memoir. For, "who"—he asked—"shall dare to summon the dead to life," reimbodying the immortal import of history?

FIRST WORLD-FESTIVAL THEATRE: THE SOUL OF MAN IN THE BODY OF ATLAS

Among those who heard his words in that vast concourse of the White City, including even those who had created its architectural splendours, there was only one who could answer—"I will dare"; for already that one had dared, and even then was creating a new instrument "to recall the tones of the martyrs and heroes, whose voices, though silent forever, still speak to us."

Steele MacKaye was that one; and he remains still, in historic record, the only one, who has ever dared to propose and demonstrate, for a great World Exposition, a commensurate dramatic

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art to interpret it, by substituting for a static ideal—a dynamic; for the motive to merely collect—the motive to create; for a museum of material products—a studio of spiritual meanings: by injecting in the pulseless heart of a giant exhibit—the pulsing lifeblood of a super-theatre: a world-festival-theatre—to imbue the body of Atlas with a human soul.

But this was not merely proposed by Steele MacKaye; he also demonstrated its entire feasibility. Prophetically, his dynamic ideal shall yet constructively kindle a future grown more communal in the humanisms of art.—In October, 1892, he felt he was even then on the verge of founding that future. Strangely moving, indeed, must have been his unspoken thoughts, as he sat in that World's Fair audience and heard those words of the official orator. For five days earlier—newly returned from his week of tranquil sojourn at Shirley, and sensing afresh the immensity of his task—he had written home to my mother:

"My dearest one—Everything is going well with the organisation of my departments. The building progresses finely. The foundations are down, and they are raising the superstructure.—When I see that great army of men, in that vast field, working night and day to carry out these audacious ideas of mine, I feel that I have not lived and worked altogether in vain.—After all, only a few men have been permitted by fate to call so much of humanity into labour as I have in my career—in spite of the meagreness of my personal means, and the obstacles and lies I have always had to fight."

"THE PEOPLES OF EARTH WERE THE CAST OF HIS PLAY": GEORGE HAZELTON

George C. Hazelton, the gifted poet-author of *The Yellow Jacket*, has expressed the spirit of those thoughts in these words of his own, written twenty-five years later:

"It was my fortune to meet Steele MacKaye when I was a boy, and the time to meet a great man is when you are a boy—especially when the great man is a boy, too! Mr. MacKaye's personality still commands me after years. His eyes are not to be forgotten, nor the inspiration of his presence. No one who met him, even once, forgot him. No one ever passed him in the crowd, without giving way and wondering who he was.

"Steele MacKaye was primarily a personality of his age and time. Few know the great things he accomplished; on the other hand, there are few who do not know he existed. Out of the crumbs that fell from his mental table, in his mad rush for art—he moulded playwrights, actors, poets. Men were his clay. The peoples of the earth were the

cast of his play, for it took an army to execute his dreams. His purse, his mind, his heart, were open to his friends.—Steele MacKaye's statue needs not be erected. He lives as a personality that admiring memory crowns."

It took indeed "an army to execute his dreams" at that time; and throughout all the personnel of its intricate organisation—from millionaire financial directors to humblest pick-and-shovel subalterns—the buoyant, visioning spirit of the "Director General" radiated his own mastering faith and knowledge of every detail. Some idea of this multiform detail to be supervised may be gathered from data in this chapter.—An early press account under caption, "Steele MacKaye's Strange Theatre, near Jackson Park, Under Way," reported:

"The building is being erected—half on land and half on water—just north of the World's Fair Grounds, between Everett Avenue and the lake. 'The north walls stand out over the Lake Michigan. There will be a stage front 9 rods wide; the ships of Columbus, with 50-foot masts, will appear on water, in front of the audience; 9,000 people may find comfortable seating, and in the rooms near the stage, on each side of the auditorium proper, 3,000 more can find places. . . . 350 feet of the original lake will be filled in, or used. The walls are of wood and 23 feet thick, in order to plan for the strongest of structures. The 2 central posts, upon which the great centre truss will rest, are 3 yards square, each. To this, truss girders will run to each of the north towers. The walls will be 150 feet in height, and 8 stories of the building are to reach half as high as the dome.'"

Steele MacKaye himself described some actual phases of the Spectatorium and its unprecedented aims for the future in his statement, already partly quoted. The rest of that statement is given in the following pages. In it, the many vast-scale details of mechanism fall into an extraordinary synthesis for the actualisation of imagined beauty.

To-day a gigantically stumbling Art of the Theatre, self-consigned to the vast ineptitudes of commercial speculation, still disdains the "impractical vision" of structural harmony which genius holds alluringly in its path, and gropes its "practical" way over our human morass, grotesquely striving to retrace the long path of evolution—which once glimpsed the Acropolis and Nazareth—backward to the abysmal protoplasm of the Unstructural. Despite, however, these inverted aims of aspiration, Nature will effectually prevent that Nemesis, for "the genius of the world" is it-

self the primal dynamic of Nature, and must inevitably achieve in art the fullness of vertebrate beauty, when the worm, Dullness, has strangled itself by its own backward convolutions.

Meantime, there are great milestones in the starward pilgrimage of genius, worthy to be inscribed with the names of their creative builders. Among such is the concept of the Spectatorium by Steele MacKave. For that reason, the following simple statement of his-for the ideal ends implicit in the vast instrumentalities of realism he describes-deserves, I believe, to be recorded among the few great milestones of communal art—a confessio amantis artium of one who died to prove his faith: *

HIS SUPER-THEATRE, 480x390x270 FT.; SCENICS, 17,000,000 CUBIC FT.; 25 MOVING STAGES, FRAMED 150x70 FT.; 600 TONS IN 40 SECONDS; 1,600 HORSE POWER; 500,000 CANDLE POWER; AUDIENCE OF 12,000.

† "With a capital of \$500,000, the company proceeded to erect the Spectatorium; and, in order to convey some fair perception of the vastness of this undertaking, it is necessary for me to describe, as tersely as possible, the structure and the production, with which this Company

had undertaken to gift this community.

"The Spectatorium was 480 feet long, 380 feet wide, and from the foundation to the apex of the dome 270 feet high.—In the front of the house were the entrance lobbies, and an immense roof garden, running the full length of the structure from east to west, overlooking the whole of Jackson Park.—There were also two large restaurant floors with a grand café, 80 feet square, in the central pavilion. Above this were to be the observation floors of the immense dome. . . . The rear of the building was a vast semi-circular reservoir, the surface dimensions of which were over 100,000 square feet. From the foundation of the reservoir to the gridiron of the scenic department, the height was 170 feet, making the cubic measurement of the Scenitorium, or Scenic department alone, over 17,000,000 cubic feet. Here was to be placed all the newly invented machinery for a startling advance in realism.

"There were to be twenty-five telescopic stages, all of which were to be furnished with scenery of an entirely new species devised by myself. The frame of the stage pictures was 150 by 70 feet, and the full range of the vision of the public, at the horizon of the picture, would have been over 400 feet. It would have required over six miles of railroad track for these stages to move upon, and their aggregated weight would have been over 1,200 tons. In making a change of scene, the machinery of the building would have easily controlled over 600 tons, and would

* This faith and ideal he proposed to extend from America to the great

this fath and the proposed to extend from America to the great centres of Europe. Cf. pages ii, 295, 302, 437.

† From a statement by Steele MacKave, personally delivered by him before the first audience of his "Scenitorio," The World Finder, at the opening of his Scenitorium, Chicago, Feb. 5, 1894—three weeks before his death. Earlier portions are quoted on pages ii, 311, 332, 340.

have made each change within forty seconds. . . . An entirely new system of lighting was to be used in connection with these stages, the aim being to arrive at as close a reproduction of the subtle light effects of nature as modern mechanism made possible. It would have required, to produce these effects, an amount of light equal to over 500,000 candle power, and all the mechanism by which this light was to be managed was entirely new in design and character.

"There was also the cyclone machinery, the running of which would have required over 400 horse power, and the immense current-and-wave-makers, requiring an equal amount of force. There would have been moments when the mechanism, which would have been simultaneously active in producing some of the effects, would have required over 1,600 horse power, or more power than was used in the great machinery hall of the Centennial Exposition of 1876 in Philadelphia. This mechanism would have been capable of producing, in the most realistic manner, all sorts of land- and water-scape effects, and every kind of weather, as well as natural illuminating effects.

METEORS, AURORA, LIGHTNING, DAWN, TWILIGHT, SETTING CONSTELLATIONS, RAINBOW, WIND, STORM, FOG, RAIN:—SYNTHESIS OF POETRY, MUSIC, DRAMA, SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, MECHANICS, SCHOLARSHIP, "SUBSIDIZING WORLD-GENIUS FOR EDUCATION OF MASSES" THROUGH PERENNIAL FOLK-FESTIVALS

"Among the light realisms were all the optical phenomena produced by the passage of time from night, through the early dawn, the rising of the sun, through all the hours of the day with their changing shadows, to the setting of the sun, followed by all the tints of the twilight, and the gradual appearance of the constellations, accurately depicted as they exist in the southern hemisphere—the stars softly stealing through the evening sky into the night, and thence through deepest darkness to the day again; also the falling stars and meteors, the milky way, the aurora borealis, the real lightning, and the real rainbow. . . . Among the weather effects, were to be the clear day through all the subtle modulations of the approaching storm with real haze and fog and rain. In addition, the real wind effect of almost every degree of force, with the movement of real waves of water, presenting thus all the phases of the atmosphere produced by different degrees of temperature and humidity, combined with the many capricious aspects of the sea. . . . The purpose of this mechanism was to bring into the realm of art as perfect a reproduction of nature as possible, so that-while giving the natural effects a grand and magnificent frame-all these effects, with the various moods of mind which they excite in the breast of the poet, might be celebrated by symphonic music and glorious song.

"A NEW ART FORM": THE DYNAMICS OF STRUCTURAL HARMONY

"In short, the aim was to create a harmonious blending of nature and art such as had never before been effected, and to utilise this union for the most impressive and inspiring illustrations of the noblest stories of human struggle and achievement which history reveals.

"The conception was in its character so vast, and upon a scale so

grandiose, that it was firmly believed a Spectatorium could never be successfully degraded to the presentation of the petty or the vulgar; as the intention of all those most intimately associated with the construction of this building was to found an institution which should become a magnificent arena for the closest alliance of all the fine arts with science, philosophy, and mechanics, thus creating a new form of art—through which the noblest spirits, collaborating with the profoundest scholarship, might ultimately succeed in subsidising the genius of the whole world, for the education and inspiration of the masses, while affording them, at moderate prices, an entertainment as irresistibly

fascinating as it was ennobling.

"Such was the spirit in which the management of the Spectatorium hoped to commence a series of productions, to follow one another in the years to come, which would so improve and progress as finally to reach the loftiest heights of artistic achievement, and make Chicago as famous as a grand art-centre, as it is fast becoming a focus of the most brilliant business ability.—To this end, a free, but strictly professional, school of music, acting, and scenic fine art, was started, and, as the means of the Company increased, this college was to have been equipped with every facility, which invention and the employment of the ablest teachers and trainers could ensure, for the most practical and efficient culture of the art genius of America, without regard to its means, colour, or condition.—Thus it was hoped that the Spectatorium was ultimately to become, not only the arena for the grandest art productions, but also the centre of the most thorough and elevating art training."

In the above statement of Steele MacKaye it is pertinent to stress the synthetic quality of certain of his large concepts: notably his clear allusions to "the various moods of mind" felt by the poet; to the "collaboration of noblest spirits with profoundest scholarship"; to "subsidising the genius of the world," for the world's true progress through "the closest alliance of all the fine arts with science, philosophy and mechanics," in creating a new art form—building beyond an ephemeral moment toward horizons of the ages: concepts which deeply express the epochal aim of this biography, which necessarily is concerned with forces of destiny outlasting individual life.

The technical structure described above by my father was practically demonstrated by him. The idealistic aims therein outlined implied for their consummation (as they would require to-day) a harmonious co-operation between the clear insights of capital and of creative art in the will to achieve humanitarian ends. That co-operation also existed, to an unusual degree, in the harmony of purposes shared by Steele MacKaye and some of his financial supporters.

CAPITALISTS AND BEWILDERED ECONOMICS; SANS SALARY
AND EXPENSE COSTS

In building the Spectatorium,—at last, and for the first time, for him—Steele MacKaye secured the co-operation of business men, united by that uncommercial spirit in which he himself had always laboured—the spirit of sincere social service. By long years of devotion to that spirit, he had fitted himself to respond to the unique creative call, occasioned by this world tribute to the unselfish seer who discovered America.

Often, heretofore, that spirit in Steele MacKaye had encountered smiles of derision from business associates, who none the less had used it to fill their own pockets. Now it was the first and essential factor which rallied to him the confidence and enthusiastic respect of business associates, who realised—perhaps for the first time—that the "insane humanitarian error" long attributed to MacKaye was the only practical truth, which could cope with the great civic opportunity and national duty which the World's Fair revealed to them in common.

"Steele MacKaye," wrote World's Fair Commissoiner, Moses P. Handy,* "has sometimes been spoken of as a man of failures. On the contrary, his was a life filled with brilliant successes. His projects failed only in the respect that the pecuniary reward of his greatest achievements invariably fell into the hands of others.—Never until he came to Chicago, in 1892, did he have the sympathetic backing of men who were not inspired solely by the desire for mercenary rewards. And when the dream of his life was fulfilled in his obtaining the kind of cooperation he wanted, as bad luck would have it, he came to grief through causes alike beyond his and their control.—Such men as Pullman and Gage rallied to his support because they believed that, if he succeeded, something of surpassing moment in art would be done for Chicago, where the Spectatorio would be the crowning glory of the World's Columbian Exposition."

The personnel, however, of the Columbia Celebration Company did not comprise solely men of the calibre of George M. Pullman and Lyman J. Gage. Like all organisations it was somewhat atrophied by red-tape; was bewildered in solving a new economics, and had no insight or experience in appraising a creative artist's working wage. Moreover, the men of great wealth, who controlled its finances, could hardly conceive that their princely mannered associate, MacKaye, could really be in circumstances close to destitu-

^{*} In the Chicago Inter Ocean, Feb. 27, 1894; quoted also on pages ii, 297, 298, 312, 314, 318.

tion.—So it was that some of the Board of Directors actually expected their penniless Director-General to pursue his arduous night-and-day labours for many months, wholly without pay, except in the futurity of his stock investment in the enterprise. Indeed this Director-General himself had characteristicly made no advance stipulations whatever in regard to his own financial remuneration.

"I have been waiting," my father wrote home to my mother, Oct. 16, '92, "until the second assessment had been made, before bringing my personal affairs before the Directors. . . . I know now that they will not vote me any back salary or expense costs. Many of them seem to think that I ought to work merely for my stock interest in the scheme. I will not, however, work for less than \$250 a week, and I shall then send you a regular weekly remittance.

"COUNTLESS DETAILS: DRIVING MECHANICS, SCENE-MAKERS, ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, DAY AND NIGHT"

"The project is so colossal, so complicated, so packed with countless details, that there is scarcely a moment some department is not demanding my direction. Night and day and Sundays, I am driving mechanics, scene-makers, engineers, architects. . . . I have just received a letter from dear Ben * which makes my heart glow with happiness. All through it shines out clearly to me the beautiful spirit, which lies at the root of his proud little heart.—We shall open the MacKaye Spectatorium here in May, about the 15th, and I shall arrange to have the whole family here then. . . . With love deeper, purer, more steadfast, than words of mine can suggest—from the deepest recesses of my being—I greet you, one and all!—S. M."

For a time, at least, the matter of salary appears to have been settled satisfactorily, for on October 31st, this telegram—received by my mother, at Shirley—startled my rustic dreams with visions of metropolitan splendours:

"Shall arrive to-morrow Everett House, New York. If Percy can leave studies, have him join me there to-morrow night.—S. M."

As my studies were home tasks self-imposed, early the next morning I was off joyously for New York, where I joined my father, at his suite of rooms in the quaint old Everett House, corner of North Union Square and Fourth Avenue, for a sojourn of ten wonderful days.

"He is very well," recorded my diary, "and everything is going magnificently."

^{*} His youngest son, Benton, then aged thirteen.

There I found Col. Henry Watterson, ardent Democrat, who had come east with his old Republican friend, in a joint enthusiasm for Spectatorium interests and an ancient dissension of politics, renewed in the campaign of Benjamin Harrison versus Grover Cleveland, then in its white heat, just before the imminent Election on November 8th.—That evening of my arrival at the hotel, the black walnut table between the two devoted antagonists resounded to the thumping of polemical fists as the battle of arguments reverberated with old thunders of the Civil War.

INTERVIEWERS: BRAND WHITLOCK, RICHARD HARDING DAVIS, CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

During those ten days, our hotel suite, the scene of exciting bustle, was a focus of busy conferences between my father and all assortments of men, artistic, commercial, scientific, literary. Reporters thronged the anteroom, interviewers sent up their cards, old friends and relatives thronged to welcome back the long-absent hero; for the fame of his new, vast enterprise in the west, with rumours of unique inventions and magnificent plans out-Heroding the Herods of his earlier triumphs in the east, had already come down the winds from Chicago.—Among those out there who "wrote up" his plans journalisticly was the later Mayor of Toledo, idealist and author of distinction, who became America's national hero in Belgium during the opening of the Great War. Brand Whitlock has written me:*

"I knew your father in Chicago, where I went to interview him when I was a reporter there. His was a remarkable personality. How swiftly the inexorable years have flown since then, yet I have such a vivid recollection of him, can still see him quite distinctly, so full of life and animation and enthusiasm! For the sake of that 'auld lang syne,' won't you think of me as your friend?"

Curiosity and interest were agog, and the ambient ether encircling Steele MacKaye himself was radiant with golden expectations.

—One gallant image in a doorway still glitters in my remembrance: the erect, jaunty, stylish, meticulously dashing figure of young Richard Harding Davis—standing on the sill of our apartment, hat and card in hand, sleek-haired, square-jawed,—his keen eyes glancing to catch the cordial greeting of my father from a cordon of reporters, who gave way in some pique as the newcomer entered, to hold a special-privileged interview with the Director-General of

^{*} From "Executive Offices, the City of Toledo, 19 June, 1913."

the Spectatorium. The popular author * of Gallagher, then twenty-eight, had recently published his Van Bibber and Other Stories, an inscribed copy of which he now proffered to my father, with a semi-military bow.

That day also brought an older figure of American literature in the person of Mark Twain's collaborator in The Gilded Age—Charles Dudley Warner (then sixty-three), who came to confer with my father about an article on the Spectatorium, which Warner himself was preparing to write for Harper's Magazine, where he was associate editor with Henry M. Alden. Leaving a family luncheon in our apartment, my father went downstairs with Warner and Watterson, inviting them to lunch "on business" in the café.

MAGNATES AND ARTISTS; ANTON SEIDL; DELMONICO BANQUET

For my father, these days were packed with varied activities in which I was very proud to be welcomed as his apprentice-helper. Among celebrities and magnates, who conferred with him, were interspersed quaint characters and hangers-on: "A funny little German musician, Mr. S. S. Bernstein," says my diary, "came on business, as agent, with Anton Seidl," the long-haired, brilliantly dark and distinguished Symphony Conductor, then all the rage in high musical circles.—On the evening of Nov. 4th, I turned valet to my father, hurrying him into his dress-suit, to rush off to Delmonico's, where he gave a large dinner in the interest of the Spectatorium. That night, when he returned after midnight, I tumbled out of bed to hear the news of it, while playing cards with him into the small hours—his respite for long-confirmed insomnia.

"The dinner at Delmonico's last night," comments my next-day diary, "was a great success for Spectatorium business. Before it, Father met Mrs. Thurber, and will probably get Dvořák.—Breakfasted with Mr. Watterson and Father."

The "Mrs. Thurber," here referred to, was a New York society woman, cultivated in music, who, with her husband, was active in social "patronage" of Antonin Dvořák, the eminent Bohemian composer and musician, who was at that time director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York (1892-'95).

^{*} Fifteen years later Richard Harding Davis and his wife were visiting Ethel Barrymore at a cottage in Cornish, N. H. There, in the outdoor swimming-pool, where his half-plunged back was straddled by my small son, Robin, clutching the journalist's neck with both arms in a desperation of first-swimming, Davis reminisced with me of that first meeting of ours, in my father's suite at the old Everett House, in '92.

DVOKÁK FOR SPECTATORIUM COMPOSER; SYMPHONIC REQUIREMENTS
OF NEW ART

The above brief item in my diary, of Nov. 5, '92, records a significant incident in the history of creative music, for it marks the beginning of an immediately following entente between my father and Dvořák, leading to the composition of a masterpiece in the art of Symphonic music,—"The New World Symphony," through which, though anonymously, the creative spirit of Steele Mac-Kaye's Spectatorio on the theme of the New World Discovery—despite long-obscuring, tragic circumstance—holds a noble immortality.

In the hurried events which led to this consummation I myself had some slight part, in my then capacity of errand-boy apprentice to my father; and several small items in my diary of that time have survived, to give testimony to those beginnings of the large musical result achieved by Dvořák's imagination in response to very definite instigations of my father's concept for his Spectatorium.

The occasion of this interesting aftermath arose from the intrinsic nature of that new form of art, evolved by my father from his dreams and labours of many years, as an artist of the theatre, which has partially been unfolded in this memoir. From his intimate experience, in the theatre, with the essential compromises in fine art implied by the uncontrollable elements of the human actor in drama, he had arrived at the conception of a new theatresynthesis (analogous, in that partially radical respect, to the still more radical ideal, separately arrived at by Gordon Craig, a decade or more later), which should eliminate—not indeed, the human actor altogether,—but his voice, as an individual, from the total harmony of elements of grand-scale production.

Thus, in Steele MacKaye's spectatorio, the dramatis personal neither spoke, as in drama; nor sang, as in opera. Though reduced, in that respect, to pantomimists, yet they were not conventionalised to allegorical puppets, such as Pierrot and Pierrette of the music-hall "Pantomimes." On the contrary, they were enlarged to giant human personalities—such as he conceived his Columbus, for The Great Discovery—wherein only that art and science of "Harmonic Gymnastics" (which, as we have seen, he had, all his life, been creatively evolving, and personally mastering, in his work as asthetic philosopher and teacher of expression) might provide an art of large-scale visual expression commensurate to

express the gamut of that enlarged human revealment which paused on the threshold of symbolism—without passing beyond it.

Manifestly, then, for harmonic structure in this new large-scale art, such radical elimination of the actor's voice, by thus heightening the visual elements of pantomime, conditioned a deepening of all the aural elements—choral and symphonic, magnifying the demands of both, in a clarified synthesis, whereof the musical was an equal superfactor with the visual. Hence the theatre-artist of the Spectatorio, as dramatic architect, in order to create its total harmony, must choose as his collaborators—within himself, or with out—a choral-symphonic composer and a dramatic poet.

VISUAL AND MUSICAL CLARITY: ELIMINATING WAGNER'S HYBRID ELEMENTS

Richard Wagner, being a titan, chose within, and constituted himself alone—the trinity. In so doing, however, he failed to eliminate the singing individual actor—a hybridising element which, by its inclusion, has served to warp the ideal harmony of his art, by the personality-exhibits of tenors and prima donnas.

Steele MacKaye, being also, though differently, a titan (who, though lacking the experience of musical creation, none the less realised dramaticly its imaginative structure *), while rejecting the hybridising element, sought—outside himself—his collaborators in music and dramatic song.

We have seen how earnestly he sought this vital collaboration; how already, nine months earlier—preferring to secure "American genius," if possible—he had sought George L. Osgood, of Boston (for choral work), and Walter Damrosch (for orchestral); but he was then hampered by unsolved problems of finance and organisation and so had failed to secure those composers. By midsummer he had secured a stop-gap in Frederick Archer, an English musician, then in Chicago, who now had gone to Spain to gather historic material for the Incidental music.

RELATION OF DVOŘÁK'S SYMPHONY, "THE NEW WORLD," TO MACKAYE'S SPECTATORIO ON THE NEW WORLD DISCOVERY

"On an October evening in 1892," writes Daniel Gregory Mason,† "there was given in New York City a 'Grand Concert,' in exploitation of the 'Eminent Composer and Director of the National Conservatory of Music of America,' Dr. Antonin Dvořák. . . . Here was a Bohemian

^{*} Cf. Stillman Kelly's statement on page ii, 134.

[†] In his essay on Dvorák, in From Grieg to Brahms, The Outlook Company, 1903.

peasant, a butcher's son, who for years had endured grinding poverty and obscurity, coming at last, a famous musician, to hear his works performed and his genius extolled in a great, enthusiastic country . . . where, at a salary of \$15,000 a year, the National Conservatory had engaged him as principal. . . Dvořák's reception in New York was a victory achieved over peculiarly indifferent destiny by peculiarly indomitable pluck."

Peculiarly, too, were that pluck and destiny analogous to those of Columbus—theme of the New World Spectatorio of Steele Mac-Kaye, to whom peculiarly such "indomitable" qualities appealed, in his search for a noble, imaginative composer, of a stature required to shape in music that creative "hemisphere" which should round out the other half of his visual concept of a new world-art. So—quickly following upon that "October evening in 1892"—Steele MacKaye's trip, in early November, to New York, was chiefly for the purpose of securing, if possible, Anton Dvořák, as the composer for his Spectatorio on Columbus.

At the same time, Dvořák's patroness, Mrs. Thurber—having heard, through Anton Seidl, concerning the unique opportunity for musical composition provided by the announced Spectatorium production of MacKaye at the New-World Columbian Exposition—was eager to bring the genius of Dvorák to the immediate attention of MacKaye. So it happened that, on the evening of Nov. 15th, just before MacKaye's Delmonico dinner, Mrs. Thurber and Steele MacKaye met and discussed the matter of Dvořák's becoming the composer-in-chief of the music for *The Great Discovery*, or—as it was also named—*The World Finder*.

Mrs. Thurber was seeking a great opportunity for a great composer; MacKaye was seeking a great composer for a great opportunity. In their conference, therefore, it appeared to them both as providential that the opportunity at hand and the composer at hand were equally desirable and available.

The nature of the opportunity to Dvořák himself was, of course, peculiarly appealing. To express a vast New World theme, on a scale of synthetic grandeur and timeliness such as was now offered to him by the production of MacKaye's spectatorio on Columbus, during the five months' festival of the Columbian Exposition, in the very heart of America, under orchestral leadership of his expert friend, Anton Seidl, was an auspicious occasion for the highest utterance of his genius not likely ever to recur. Besides this, the whole trend and spirit of his genius was at that time allured by the

task and opportunity implied by a distinctively American utterance in music. To that end, he had been giving special study to collecting and imaginatively absorbing "folk" themes of the negro and the American Indian—the latter peculiarly appropriate to aspects of MacKaye's Spectatorio.

These special studies and imaginings, of course, would probably in any case have found embodiment in some form, or forms, of Dvořák's compositions. The immediate call, however, in early November, 1892, for him to construct a large orchestral work symphonic in character, for production the following spring, in MacKaye's Spectatorium, at the World's Fair opening, in May of '93, must be accounted, I believe, historically as the occasion for Dvořák's inception of this work of his as a structural whole, and for certain musical aspects of "The New World Symphony," as related to dramatic elements in MacKaye's music scenario on the theme of the New World Finder.

A YEAR LATER SEIDL CONDUCTS NEW WORLD SYMPHONY, NEW YORK

"When the New World Symphony was first performed in New York," * writes Lawrence Gilman, "the Philharmonic programme-book published this announcement, on the authority of the composer:—'On his arrival in America, the composer was deeply impressed by the conditions and spirit peculiar to this country. . . . He found that the works that he created here . . . were clearly influenced by the new surroundings. . . . Dr. Dvořák made a study of Indian and Negro melodies. . . . He identified himself with their spirit, made their essential contents—not their formal, external traits—his own. . . . So he strove, in the present symphony, to reproduce the fundamental characteristics of the melodies which he had found here. . . . While the contents of the Sym-

*This first performance, from manuscript, by the Philharmonic Society of New York took place, in New York, on December 15, 1893, under the direction of Anton Seidl. At that date, two months before he died, Steele MacKaye, very ill, was preparing, at Chicago, the first production of The World Finder at his Scenitorium, which opened Feb. 5, 1894—on which date, for the first time, a public production was given, triumphantly vindicating the whole great scheme of the Spectatorium, of which it was partially representative.

Meantime, however, during the interval of time since the great failure of the Spectatorium in the spring and early summer of 1893, a public sense of sombre catastrophe overhung the whole project of MacKaye; so it is far from strange that no allusion was then made by Dyořík to the original connection.

Meantime, however, during the interval of time since the great failure of the Spectatorium in the spring and early summer of 1893, a public sense of sombre catastrophe overhung the whole project of MacKaye; so it is far from strange that no allusion was then made by Dvořák to the original connection of "The New World Symphony" with MacKaye's Spectatorio.—It is directly pertinent to such connection, however, that Anton Seidl, the same orchestral conductor who signed contract with Steele MacKaye (on November 28, 1892, in New York) to conduct the orchestra of the Spectatorium—was also the same person who conducted—a year later—the first performance of "The New World Symphony," on Dec. 15, 1893, in New York.—Since my father's death (Feb. 25, 1894) no occasion has ever arisen to call attention to these data, until the present publication of this memoir, in 1927.



VICTOR HERBERT

Composer of Comic Operas, Oratorios, Songs, "Natoma", Grand Opera.





ANTON DVORAK

Bohemian Composer; Director National Conservatory of Music, New York (1892—'95).

COMPOSERS ASSOCIATED IN WORK WITH STEELE MACKAYE

Of these, for MacKaye's Spectatorio, "The World Finder" (1892—'93), Dvordk composed portions of his "New World Symphony," and Herbert composed music for the Pantomine Scenario (pages 378, 353; 356; 360-362). For MacKaye's play, "Paul Kauvar, or Anarchy" (1887), Stilman-Kelley composed a Suite of Incidental Music, withOverture (page ii, 133).

Composer of "New England Symphony,"

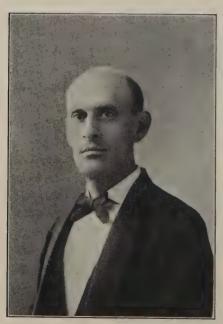
"Macbeth," "Pilgrim's Progress," etc.



RICHARD HARDING DAVIS (Pages 351, 352.)



BRAND WHITLOCK (Photo, 1926; page 351.)



EUGENE FIELD (Pages i, 465; ii, 372.)



ELWYN A. BARRON (Pages 445, 447, 461.)

AUTHOR JOURNALISTS OF THE EARLY 'NINETIES Interviewers of "Director-General MacKaye" of the Spectatorium. phony have been suggested by Indian and Negro melodies, the symphonic form has been carefully observed."

That "spirit of national American melodies" was peculiarly the spirit which Steele MacKaye desired to secure as the appropriate imbuing spirit of the music which should interpret his spectatorio on the theme of the discovery of the New World; for his own treatment of that theme was not primarily historic or archeologic,* but essentially was symbolic and prophetic.

With this much of preface concerning the congeniality of the creative purposes animating this American theatre artist and this Bohemian composer newly enamoured of America, I return to the events briefly recorded in my diary, on November 5th, '92.

MY FATHER APPOINTS ME HIS "DRAMATIC POET"; CONVERTS HOTEL SUITE TO COLUMBUS' SHIP

After his Delmonico dinner, that night, my father returned to the Everett House, on fire with the idea of Dvořák for his composer, and with plans for conferring with him and Mrs. Thurber during the next few days of his New York stay at the Everett House, while the rough sketch of his spectatorio-scenario was there being made ready and typed to submit to the great composer. So, while I sat playing cards with my father till gray of dawn, he told me of these plans, in which he eagerly wanted my assistance-not merely now as errand-boy-but as dramatic poet! For, in his scenario, he wished to embody immediately the words of some completed choral-songs, expressive of the meanings of the action, at several great "musical moments" of the drama, in order to present to Dvořák as definitely vivid an impression as possible of the varied musical elements involved in the production.

This sudden appeal to me, was, of course, a spurring call to a lad of seventeen, who already, for two or three years, had been teasing his Muse and testing his hand in the writing and directing of "poetic drama," with incidental music,† for local community productions in his New England "home-town." From the rustic simplicities of Shirley's old Town Hall, to the cosmopolitan splen-

^{*} Elements of archeology and history entered only into "Incidental" music,

properties, etc. Cf. page ii, 327.

† Composed by Mrs. Lewis B. Monroe (sister to George L. Osgood) for my early plays, Cinderella (produced at Shirley, summer of 1891) and The Sleeping Beauty.

dours of the World's Fair,—that was an alluring leap, and led at once to my first work, as dramatic poet, for professional production. This quick summons to take the leap was indeed a bit staggering; but the first plunge proved exhilarating, and remains a gladly vivid memory of my boyhood.

In an immense high-ceiling'd room, overlooking Union Square about six stories up, though it was Sunday afternoon (Nov. 6th), a hired woman-typewriter (one Miss Knowlton) was busily typing the scenario, while my father sat, with Henry Watterson and myself, at a great table piled with manuscripts, charts and buildingplans. Before long, my father rose from his chair. Oblivious of the clicking machine, he began then to describe to me the physical and spiritual adventures of Christopher Columbus in midocean, on that first voyage of new world discovery; till soon the floor of our steam-heated hotel room became the gale-swept deck of a mediæval ship, where—through the autumnal light above Union Square vistas of colossal billows, looming like wild mountains in motion, were overhung and shot through with lightning visions of saints and demons in sanguine-coloured conflicts, substantiating with their forms the battling minds and hearts of awe-stricken sailors beneath, surrounding there the silent figure of their captain, whose quiet eyes were fixed far off-beyond reverberant storms-on the radiant goal of his faith.

Long before he had ceased speaking, the clicking typewriter had stopped, and our room was breathless with the imagined awe of his recital.

"Now, Percy," he said abruptly, "express all that in a poem for music. Write me the *Storm Choral* for my Spectatorio.—The typewriter is waiting to copy it."

Then he handed me a scratch-pad, led me to the door of an inner sleeping room, opened it, pointed in, and said: "Go in there! Don't come out till you've finished it. Rap on the door, when it's done, and I'll let you out, but not before. Remember, my boy! 'Knock,—and it shall be opened!'"

So, with a mysterious smile, he closed the door behind me, turning the key in the lock.

HE LOCKS ME IN A BEDROOM, WHERE I WRITE STORM CHORAL

There I found myself alone, in the dim, small bedroom, whose one shut window showed only the blank wall of a grey airshaft.—

But that outer wall opened into an inner vastness. I was not here in that little bedroom; I was still there in that awful midocean of the Middle Ages, where his voice—even more than his words—had conjured me. And if ever my whole heart were bursting for expression, it was then.

I paced the tiny room, a thousand leagues—yet dumbly. I felt myself revolved in a whirlpool of images, staring upward at their breaking rockets, yet sucked downward into gulfs of stark blindness. Still I paced, till at last came words, tumultuous, chaotic—torn shreds only of what I saw and heard. This would never do! I must feel less, and give over thinking.—I sat down on the bed, knuckling my hands together; sat there very still for a while, seeing and feeling almost nothing. Presently I was quiet; rhymes hovered and hummed like bees; then words rose quietly, in sequence of form, and with stealthy pencil, moving like the handle of a butterfly-net, I caught them, in drumbling rows, line by line, clapping them down on my scratch-pad: the last of their airy ranks—a remnant of two—in a deep, reverberating "Go BACK!"

So—I had captured them! It seemed then I had imprisoned a vast hemisphere of sky and ocean—a whole New World of imagery.
—And I rapped on the bedroom door. . . .

Swift came the springing footsteps to open it—the beaming face of my father to welcome me back, with a great hug,—now into dazzling gas-light, for I had been in there, by the dim air-shaft, for about three hours.

"Henry! He's done it," shouted my father to Col. Watterson. "I told you so! Now will you believe me?—Listen!"

"HENRY—I TOLD YOU SO!" READING IT, HE HOLDS WATTERSON SPELLBOUND

He had snatched the paper pad, and now read it aloud—to the quizzical one-eyed Colonel, and to the most proudly dazed of young authors who ever heard his maiden effort transfigured by the dramatic tones of a matchless reader.—I quote the lines here, because they serve to complete an incident highly characteristic of the dreamer of the Spectatorium, whose description to me, that day, of a moment in the action of his drama, is herein dimly recorded.—These are the words of the *Storm Choral*, which I wrote in the locked bedroom:

"Go back! Go back!
Ye mad, in ocean's chasms lost,
Frail bark, by angry torrents tost,
Retrace your track!
The tempest god, in fearful form,
Draws near.
His voice doth thunder through the storm.—
Give ear!

"The wrathful heavens gripe the sea.
The billows, seething, clutch the skies
Where to the Furies' minstrelsy
Each monarch wrestles for the prize.
High heave, foam crown'd, the ocean's floods,
Earth's mighty tendons, straining, crack.
Join not, O Man, the war of gods.—
Death wins the spoil—Go back! Go back!
(Thunder.)

"Trust not the seeming might of waves.—Beware!

Beneath their bulk lies Satan's hollow snare.

Go back!

Here lie the phantom realms where nothing sleeps, Where, through the scum of slimy ocean grass, A monstrous hand draws seamen down to deeps Where dead of ages toss in rotten mass.

Before, there lies the dim and frightful way To spaces wild, where cold and hideous Night Sucks drop by drop the fair, warm blood of Day; Where ghostly Norns, unkenn'd to mortal sight, Weave life-fates black;

Where battish demons whirr their dusky wings
To shun the vomit of some monstrous birth.
Rash men! Here ends the realm of worldly things.
Dare not the unknown confines of the earth!
Go Back!!"

The lines, of course, were those of a youngster, but my father's masterly rendering wrought in them a magic of his own. He expressed again— as so often before to his children—that generous delight in the "tendre croppes" of his young scions, which was itself creative dew and sun to them. The pleasure of pleasing him was an honour beyond price, though the gusto of Col. Watterson was an added honour.

MORE CHORALS: "CLEVELAND'S ELECTED!"—SCENARIO DELIVERED
TO DVOŘÁK

Music plans now took precedence over all others in my father's crowded days. To his conference with Dvořák the latter had

responded with enthusiastic interest, sprung from his own congenial experience in composing works of music analogous in choral spirit to MacKaye's Spectatorio, such as his oratorio, St. Ludmila (1886), and his then most recent production, Requiem Mass (1891).—To secure him, as orchestral conductor, as well as composer, for the Spectatorium proved unfeasible; but, for the position of orchestra conductor, Dvořák was hearty in his endorsement of Anton Seidl, whom that Sunday evening (Nov. 6) in consequence, we all went to see at Lenox Hall, where Seidl conducted a symphony concert.

The next day, I continued my labours of the scenario Muse. I wrote a *Mocking Chorus*, for the Demoniac Voices, tempting and disheartening Columbus' seamen.—The following was Election Day and, during the afternoon turbulence of crowds on Union Square, rising murmurous to our hotel rooms, I wrote another contribution to the scenario for Dvořák—the *Meteor Chorus*, to accompany the falling stars of my father's new firmament of inventions. Of that evening my diary records:

"Later watched the search-light on Madison Square Garden tower, to see who's President. After 12, crowds passed, shouting 'Cleveland's elected!' and

'Sóld!—Sóld!
Old Hárrison thinks he's sóld!'"

On the next day (Nov. 9th), my diary has this entry:

"Evening—I went to see Mrs. Thurber, 49 West 25th—on business for Father. I liked her very much. Met also Mr. Thurber."

The "business" in this interview concerned the new plans with Dvořák, for whom I carried a message from my father. Mrs. Thurber, who was holding a reception, left all her guests in the spacious parlours, to talk with me in a quiet alcove. I recall her gracious, earnest interest, her grey jewelled hair, her erect high-bred bearing and friendly smile, at "au revoir."—For Thursday, Nov. 10,* my diary records:

"Miss Knowlton, the typewriter, was here during A. M., hurrying through the scenario. We all stayed in, working till noon, when Father

^{*} For that day, my diary also records: "I went to the Alpine (33rd and B'way) with Cousin Henry MacKaye. Looked over some of Father's Mss. there." (This records the earliest beginning of preparing material for this memoir, though I was not then aware of it.)

and Art * left in a great rush, to get the train for Chicago. . . . After they had gone, I went in coupé to Mrs. Thurber's."

On this call again at Mrs. Thurber's I delivered to her the typed first draft of my father's music scenario + for Dvořák.

HISTORIC "FEVERISH DISCUSSION" OF DVOKAK'S SYMPHONY

So was set definitely on foot an auspicious working entente between a great composer and a great artist of the theatre, whichbut for a tragical sequence of events-would have resulted in an unparallelled production, the following May, at the World's Fair, where Dvořák's masterpiece, From the New World, in its main elements, might have had its first performance—not as a symphony in a concert hall, but as a majestic orchestral portion of the new dramatic art-form of Steele MacKave's Spectatorium, rendered by an orchestra of 120 pieces, directed by Anton Seidl.

During that winter and early spring of '92-'93, the events referred to put that consummation out of the question; and Dvořák's Symphony had, instead, its first rendering at New York, on December 15, 1893, directed by Anton Seidl. ‡

I have recorded, somewhat at length, the foregoing history of actual and potential events, not only because these serve to reveal the large calibre of my father's designs for his Spectatorium and his characteristic genius for seeking and developing in art the highest type of co-operative opportunity for the genius of others; but also because the foregoing record provides new and suggestive material for still reverberating polemics in regard to the origins of The New World Symphony .- Mr. Philip Hale, the distinguished music critic of Boston, states that Dvořák's Symphony caused, on its first performance, "feverish days of discussion"; and Mr. Henry E. Krehbiel, the New York critic, declared that it "has created a greater stir in the musical world than any instrumental piece composed in its decade, except possibly Tchaikowsky's "Symphonic Pathetique."

That first Everett House sojourn of my father had lasted ten days (Nov. 1-10). Again, on the 18th, he was back there from Chicago, for another ten-days' visit, during the latter part of * My brother, Arthur.

† The Scenario, in more completed form, was delivered by me to my father

† The Scenario, in more completed form, was derivered by me to my father for Dvořák on Dec. 26, '92. Cf. page ii, 365. —Space does not here permit a detailed comparison between the structures of the music-scenario of The World Finder and of Dvořák's symphony No. 5, in E minor, From the New World—a comparative study of which would prove interesting.

which I was again summoned by wire to return (Nov. 26) from Shirley, this time with the family, to join him for a belated Thanksgiving and to take up our quarters in New York, at 55 West 19th Street, where we boarded that winter and early spring.—On that Sunday of our return to New York (Nov. 27), albeit the place was a hotel, my father presided, once more as of old in patriarchal festivity, at a long board groaning with Thanksgiving and girt around with kindred and friends.

"It was like old times again," exclaimed my diary. "In the evening, Mr. Freisinger, Father's secretary, gave us a box for Seidl's concert at Lenox hall."

SEIDL ENGAGED FOR SPECTATORIUM: ORCHESTRA OF 120, CHORUS, 600 The next day (Nov. 28, '92) my diary records:

"This morning, Mr. S. S. Bernstein and Mr. Seidl called to see Father, and signed the contract to play at the Spectatorium next summer.". . . Mother, Hazel and I were with Father most of the day. I am to write most of the libretto * and the chorals for the Spectatorio of 'The Great Discovery,' this winter. Father left for Chicago on the 6.30 p. m. train."

On Dec. 5, '92, a headline in the New York Herald announced—"Seidl Engaged for Chicago," with this statement:

"Mr. Samuel Bernstein closed an important contract with Herr Seidl yesterday, under which the well-known leader will take his whole orchestra to Chicago next May, to play for five months in the vast building erected by Messrs. MacKaye, Pullman, and their associates, for the presentation of a Columbus spectacle on a tremendous scale.—In addition to conducting daily his orchestra of 120 musicians, Herr Seidl will organise and conduct a chorus of 600 voices, to be used in the Spectacle. Representatives of the Chicago enterprise have been in New York for the last week, arranging for the musical part of the performance. It is understood that Herr Seidl will receive \$15,000 for his services."

I COLLABORATE WITH MY FATHER ON LIBRETTO; ESPINOSA, BALLET-MASTER From Chicago, Dec. 4th, my father wrote to my mother:

"I am nearly dead with weariness. The work accumulated fearfully while I was away. . . . Tell Percy that I am working every night on

*I wrote considerable of the dialogue and most of the choral songs for the "libretto," intended for readers, as well as to motivate the pantomime of the chief characters. My father himself (who wrote a few of the songs) devised and wrote all the detailed descriptions of the action.—"Because of the colossal scale of production," wrote my father, "the story of a spectatorio is most artistically divided between pantomime, for the most distant and extensive scenes, and speech—for those which more nearly approach the public."

libretto, which I must complete before returning to New York in two weeks. Tell him to send me each day's work on the chorals, the moment it is done. . . . In fatigue, but hope.—S. M."

Apropos of this are the following items in my diary:

(Dec. 2, '92): "I began to write the libretto of Father's Spectatorio, The Great Discovery. By night I had 3 typewritten pages done and sent off the Mss. to Father." - (Dec. 5): "I finished the Mocking Chorus; copied that and the Celestial on the Typewriter. Celestial choruses on a typewriter-rather unpoetic, I'll admit it! . . . Called on Cousin Henry (MacKaye) at the Alpine . . . brought back some of Father's scrap-books from there." *—(Dec. 6): "Wrote more on the libretto: Columbus' prayer, etc."—(Dec. 7): "Wrote a choral for the Voices of the Spectatorium at end of 1st Act. But it won't do, I guess .- During the afternoon, I typewrote more of Will's 'Catch-All." † (Dec. 8): "Dear Will would have been twenty-four years old to-day, had he lived. His loss to me is even greater than at the time of his death, for I know now what he would have been to me-and to us all!" (Dec. 9):-"Walked across Brooklyn Bridge, and wrote two chorals."

(Dec. 11): "Last night, after midnight, a messenger brought this telegram from Father to me: 'Delighted with work. Keep on fast. I shall arrive New York to-morrow afternoon.'-At about 3 P. M. to-day he arrived—staved till 4—then had to hurry to the Gilsey House. Ben. Hazel and I walked up with him. He says the Spectatorium is built up to the roofgarden already."—(Dec. 12): "About 12, to the Gilsey, where at last I succeeded in extracting Father from a lot of slow-talking men (one of them, Mr. Epinosa, the ballet-dance master was a character) and brought him down here (55 W. 19 St.) to lunch. He had to take the 2 P. M. train back to Chicago."—(Dec. 15): "Wrote a choral for Columbus' Vision Scene in First Act."-(Dec. 24): "This afternoon we all spent in waiting for Father to arrive. Arthur arrived at 6 o'clock, and we thought he was Father, before we saw him. He has raised a beard.—After a telegram, Father himself arrived at 8 o'clock. His train was 4 hours late."

LAST CHRISTMAS REUNION; SIGNING CONTRACTS; LIBRETTO TO DVORÁK

So again he was back in New York for six days, timed to include Christmas with his home circle. That was our very last Christmas reunion with our beloved chieftain—a gathering buoyant with hope and the glamours of prosperity, for none of us knew it was the last. The kind of creative confidence he bestowed upon all

* The scrap-books thus saved then from loss at the Alpine apartment have

been used in writing this biography. Cf. footnote on page ii, 361.

† During about two years, at this time, I copied and typed all the Mss. and note books of my brother, William Payson MacKaye,—about 100,000 words: a revealing task which deeply influenced all my after-life as a writer.

his children is expressed in this inscription which he wrote for me in a small Excelsior Diary, 1893, which he gave me then, among other gifts:

"Xmas, 1892.—Dear Son, May each page here record the divine gladness of new growth-and show, to subtle-seeing eyes, the prophecy of that great function, which my heart declares you will perform, for our bewildered race, in this problem-ridden world.-With love that mocks expression .- Your Father."

During the final week of the "old year" of '92, these items of my diary are concerned chiefly with music plans, involving the work of Dvořák:

(Monday, Dec. 26): "'Uncle Frank' Carpenter, Benton, Hazel and I went to the Gilsey House to see Father. We found him waiting for business people, who didn't keep their appointments. I brought him my chorals, libretto, etc., and his scenario to show to the great Dvořák." † . . . (Dec. 28): "At 3 p. m. Father came over, and wrote out a description of the chorals I did not understand about. At 5 o'clock, I went with him to the Gilsey House. There I blotted contracts that he filled out and signed, till after 6. Saw Gen. Geo. Sheridan there.-"In evening, to see As You Like It at Daly's. ! Miss Ada Rehan did very well; the play was delightful. After it, took a midnight lunch with Father, Jamie and Cousin Henry, at the Gilsey."-(Dec. 29): "Father left for Chicago at 10 A. M."—(Dec. 30):—"Wrote choral of Spectatorium Chorus, end of Act. I."—(Dec. 31): "I wrote another choral—for Scenitorium Chorus. . . . Sent both chorals off to Father." §

During this New York visit, the music plans became more definitely determined. The choral elements of the Spectatorio were to be entrusted to me, for the words, which were to be set to music by Frederick Archer, while the purely orchestral elements were apportioned wholly to Dvorák, to be given symphonic unity.

CHORALS BY WIRE: MUSICO-POET-DRAMATISTS, PATER ET FILIUS

In New York, that winter, I was preparing myself, by homestudy, for entrance to Harvard, the following September. I was far more interested, however, in my first "professional" creative

^{*} Frank B. Carpenter, the artist—painter of "The Emancipation Proclamation"—had been a devoted friend of my father, ever since his first New York lecture, in 1871, and earlier. Cf. page i, 105, and his photograph, in Appendix. † Cf. page ii, 362, concerning delivery to Dvorák of the first draft of scenario. † Cf. p. ii, 100.

[§] From Chicago (Jan. 1, '93) he wrote to my mother: "Am delighted with Percy's choral. My pride and joy in him cannot be measured. To all happiest of New Years!"

work; for I had been thrilled by my father's commissioning me to undertake the Columbus theme—ever since that day, at the Everett House, when he had locked me in the room to write the Storm Choral for his Spectatorio.* That dedicated sense of comradeship was not imaginatively lessened by our being that season, much of the time, in separate cities. It was, however, materially handicapped by that separation.

Back in Chicago, amid absorbing duties, my father still kept his directive thought upon my writing of the chorals in our collaboration of his Spectatorio. In consequence, during January, there followed between us an interchange of conferences, by mail and telegraph, probably unique in the annals of poet-dramatists, pater et filius. Some hints of these are conveyed by the following greet-

ings, telegraphed to me from Chicago by my father:

(Jan. 9, '93): "Chorals for end Act First superb. God bless you!"—(Jan. 11): "Send chorals fast as possible, am getting anxious. Those already received very fine."—(Jan. 16): "Last choral good. Idea admirable. Needs exaltation. Make metre of Spectatorium differ from Scenitorium. Emphasise distinct character thus."—(Jan. 19): "Isabella Choral grand. Keep on and win eternal benedictions."—(Jan. 23): "Rabida Choral fine. Court fool takes liberties with dignitaries but not doctrines. Priests were ridiculed but their rites respected."—(Jan. 27): "When shall I receive new choral?"

On Jan. 13th, he had written to my mother:—"On the 18th, I expect to give an exhibition of the new model to all the stockholders.—We are very backward. I am at my post every instant—goaded with work and harassing anxieties. I have not had an instant to make out my ac-

counts."

At this time my father, though "goaded with harassing anxieties," wrote to me the following—out of his own ripe experience and his self-abnegating affection:

(Jan. 14): "My precious boy—I have only a moment: I send you a music plot, which may offer you some further suggestions. You will see I have taken the liberty of changing slightly some of your lines. Now, time is speeding and I am growing profoundly anxious about these chorals. Send me as soon as possible:—1. Chorals for end of Rabida.—2. Troubadour song, celebrating seriously the glory of Ferdinand and Isabella, in driving the Crescent out of Spain.—3. Jonglers' song, depicting humorously the revelry of the Christian at his victory over the pagan Moor. This should be quaint—taking the liberty of the Court fool, with all the dignitaries of the time.—4. Chorals to the Queen, at

^{*} Cf. page ii, 25 ("To my son and comrade," etc.) and page ii, 466.

end of the Grenada Scene.-5. Sailors drinking song-to be sung in the drinking-house beside the church in Palos. This song should express the profane recklessness of merry Jack at all that may happenwith the false courage of a full belly defying the devil and jeering the church. It is intended as a contrast to the mass music and should emphasise, without being seriously offensive, that important contrast.-These five chorals will give me the First Act complete. It is a great task I impose on you, my dear helpful son, but none can do it so well for me as you; and it is a source of unspeakable pride to me that your life should be interwoven with mine in this, the noblest work of my life. I hate to tax your mind and strength, but try to realise all that is implied in a glorious success to us now, and that may quicken your inspiration, and make more easy your work. . . . I shall send you the music plot of the 2nd Act next week, with such full details as I can find time to give. Don't study or do any work, now, but this. Exercise -and ideas will flow. Sluggish blood makes a torpid brain. Everything is going well here—but the weather, which is so bitterly cold that, for four days, all work on the building has been stopped.*—Embrace all the treasures for your loving father.—S. M."

(Jan. 21): "My dear son: . . . In determining the best metres for music, it is wise to change some of the metres for the different chorals you have already written. Do not be discouraged at this, but take heart from the fact that you have succeeded so well in the past, and that these rewritings are essential to the development of skill in work of this kind. . . . I need not tell you how proud I am of what you have done, nor how gratefully confident I am of your success in doing what remains.—Your father, Steele MacKaye."—(Feb. 3): "Dear old Percy—We begin publication of the Libretto in March, and we must get ready to go to print as soon as possible.—I have only time to drop this

hint.—In haste and deepest love to all, your father.—S. M."

In response to the above, I consented willingly to some changes in metres, but in doing so, I wrote to my father expressing the wish that my words, when published in the libretto, might be printed without change in the forms, as originally written, which I preferred poeticly. Referring to this, he wrote to my mother:

"Percy shall have all his own dear heart desires, as regards the publication of his verses without change. Let him follow his own inspirations. I shall send him the metres for the chorals as soon as possible."

The "libretto" of the Spectatorio, however, was never published, as the terrible panic of '93 soon afterward stopped all operations. Selections from my choral poems and portions of the written dialogue were to have appeared in *The MacKaye Spectatorium Magazine*, of which the partly filled "dummies" were printed but the first issue was never published.

^{*} Cf. on page ii, 397,—the tragic results of this.

THE LENGTHENING SHADOW OF A CONTRACT

The contents of this chapter have given some inkling of labours and aims involved in the auspicious inception of the Spectatorium project, especially in its musical aspects. We have now to see how these aims implied and necessitated the simultaneous additional labours of training executives and participants to fulfil the new, unprecedented demands: in short, of creating a many-sided school, which was, in nucleus, a vocational college of fine arts.—That institution of his dreams, except for the wording of his old Hazel Kirke contract in '79, he himself might now, in '93, have endowed with his own earned millions, and thus have saved his new project from death in the crisis of its birth. Apropos of that old contract, an excerpt of my diary at this time ravels a thread of destiny that interweaves two-thirds of my father's professional career. On Jan. 28, '93, I wrote:

"In the afternoon, Hazel and I went to a matinée at The People's Theatre, in the Bowery, and saw 'Hazel Kirke.' It's the first time we'd seen it; (i. e., I'd seen it before, but was too young to remember it.) Saw Mr. Couldock bt. the acts."

On that occasion, I recall old Charles W. Couldock's gruff but warm goodwill in greeting these children of the author of that endless success, to which his own life was irrevocably linked; * especially in welcoming to his stage dressing-room that play's first namesake, my sister Hazel, now thirteen, during whose entire life he had been acting the old miller, Dunstan; while through all those years the box-office receipts had been ceaselessly pouring into the coffers of middlemen, whose labours of "uplifting the American drama," had solicitously obliterated the authorship and income of a leading American dramatist.—Of such, long ago, Milton communed with the immortal spirit of his dead friend Lycidas:

"How well could I have spared for thee....

Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake

Creep and intrude and climb into the fold—

Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold

A sheep-hook."

"Blind mouths" indeed are those bacilli of civilisation, that feed, age after age, on the heart-tissue of genius.

^{*} This part of *Dunstan*, Couldock continued to act to the very end of his life, the last hour of which occurred just after removing his *Dunstan* make-up in his theatre dressing-room, to go to a hotel room, where he died, in 1898, after nearly two decades of almost continuous acting in the old miller's rôle. Cf. page i, 398.

CHAPTER XXX

VICTORIOUS DEFEAT

Chicago

Feb., '93—July, '93

NATIONAL CURIOSITY; THE WORLD'S LARGEST THEATRE

By early February, 1893, the spectatorium enterprise, in all its manifold departments, was in full blast of auspicious preparations and construction. Though its creator privately sensed the tremendous odds of time and labour against him, yet to the general public no apparent shadow overhung his project. The circles of the theatre, as well as the national press, which reported the outstanding features of the approaching World's Fair, were agog with curiosity in regard to the building of the world's largest, most novel and idealistic theatre.

Details of its huge capitalisation, the distinguished personnel of its organisers and backers, rumours of its revolutionary inventions, data of its physical dimensions, its artistic and social aims as an institution, announced to become permanent after the passing of the great Fair, were telegraphed in special press despatches, set forth in nation-wide articles and discussed in scores of editorials.

At the centre of its huge organisation, single-handed but myriad-dutied, at a time before telephones had come into common use, when practically every detail of ten thousand problems must be determined by personal conference, or by swiftly exchanged notes, penned by hand and despatched by relays of messenger-boys; there, looked to by every department, like some unexampled general of an army, or admiral of squadrons, who must not only be strategist and commander, but simultaneously must also be organizer, diplomatist, promoter, expert among artists, technician among artisans, teacher of untutored lieutenants, inventor of new instrumentalities for delicately yet massively projecting an unprecedented art-coordination, and above all be master, night and day, of his own sleep-bereft faculties—stood Steele MacKaye, "Director-General" of his dreams, self-propelled into action.

SHOPS AND STUDIOS; TROPIC IMPORTS, COSTUME AND PUBLICITY STAFFS,
THEATRE ARTS CONSERVATORY, THREE HEADQUARTERS;
THRONGING APPLICANTS

At the beginning of the new year, the ever-increasing pressure of time and details is evident in this excerpt of a letter from him

(Jan. 2, '93) "to the Executive Committee of the Columbian Celebration Company":

"Gentlemen:—I respectfully urge your most earnest attention to the following business, which should be despatched without delay:—An agent should be sent immediately south for palms.* . . . The Publicity Department should be set in operation at once. . . . The Spectatorium Conservatory should be organised immediately and set in motion. . . . The building of the shops and studios for the construction of our scenery should be commenced without the loss of another day. . . . The Costume Department should now be organized and placed under the experienced direction of Mrs. Paul Freisinger."

In Chicago, "the Columbian Celebration Company, Proprietors of the MacKaye Spectatorium" had three headquarters of organisation: one, Office of the Director General, 53, 54, 55 Auditorium Building; another, Office of the Company, 321 Rialto Building (Murray Nelson, Managing Director); and third, Production Department, occupying the eighth floor of Siegel, Cooper & Co.'s Building.

THE AURICLE AND VENTRICLE OF ETERNITY: GEO. HAZELTON AS "COLUMBUS NO. 7"

At his office rooms, Steele MacKaye was besieged by applicants for engagements, especially of the acting profession, old-stagers and young.—Of the latter one eager young genius, who later wrote Mistress Nell and The Yellow Jacket, told me—years afterward—how, lured by histrionic dreams, he dropped a promising legal job in the east, boarded a westbound train, rushed from the Chicago depot to the Auditorium Building, and bursting into the inner sanctum of the Director General, cried out:

"Here I am, Mr. MacKaye! George C. Hazelton, at your service. I've come, sir, to act Columbus in your great enterprise."

The widening eyes of the "Director General" dartled strange lightnings. Rising quietly, he slipped one arm through the arm of the young genius, and led him to the high windows, that overlooked a wide, murky view of Chicago and the misty horizons of Lake Michigan.

^{*} Chicago Globe, March 7, '93:—"Last week arrived five carloads of tropical flora from the plantations of the Boston Fruit Company, Jamaica, consisting of trees, plants, shrubs, leaves, etc., of the West Indies, for use in the landing of Columbus scene, at the MacKaye Spectatorium. The flora—to be kept in a specially prepared warehouse—was selected by Messrs. Charles R. Massey and James Robinson, who made a special trip to Jamaica for the purpose."

"My boy, look out there! Do you know all the hearts beating there under those giant cardiac ribs of smoke and steel . . . that throbbing collective organism, rhythmic to the Auricle and Ventricle of Eternity? Do you know all the human dreams, all the fears, hopes, despairs, exultations, which make the vanishing-point of that dim lake-horizon the goal of a myriad voyages of Columbus? . . . Look out there—and when your imaginings have re-lived, through backward revolution, a thousand age-pulses of the past, and forward—through as many evolutions of life to be; then, my boy, you will begin to guess the meanings of time and eternity that are focussed in one man—Columbus—whom you have kindly come to impersonate in my Spectatorio."

"Good God, sir! Is Columbus really all that?-But no human actor

can possibly impersonate all that!"

"Very true, my boy. That's one reason why I've sought to substitute the sheer grandeur of nature for the defective organism of man—in my new art synthesis."

"But surely, sir, you are going to use real actors!"

"Of course. We must use the real—to achieve the visionary. That's why I am searching for seven real actors to play Columbus."

"Seven!-to act that one part?"

"Yes. The number of our performances—three, perhaps four a day—will condition that many actors for the chief rôle, which is very arduous and exacting. I myself expect to be one of the seven."

ous and exacting. I myself expect to be one of the seven."

"Then, listen, Mr. MacKaye! You be Number One, let me understudy you, and I'll soon be good for the other six. Don't smile, sir. True,—I'm a youngster, but that's the very point in my favour. I've had no experience. You are a master director. You'll hand me your experience: Number One experience. Just consider, sir! If I were a grand old-stager—a Booth, a Salvini—what could you do with me? Could you shape such a genius to your new art?—Not a chance of it! But me—I'm young, adaptable, no old habits to change! I'm Columbus in the dough-pan. My genius will be plastic—just clay in your hands to mould. Under your regal eye, sir, a young cat like me may look like a king, anyhow. What do you say, Mr. MacKaye?—Can't I play Columbus?"

With a dreamy smile, the Director-General took a small book from his vest pocket, fingering a pencil.—"At least, my boy, you can play the courtier—to the King's taste! What's your address? For the

present, I'll put you down as Number 7."

On Jan. 13, '93, my father wrote to my mother:

"I have been trying to find a moment, dear heart, to get to bank and secure a draft for you. I must give it up. I am too occupied every instant of the waking day and night. On the 18th I expect to give an exhibition of the new model * to all the stockholders. We are very back-

*Cf. data concerning this model on page ii, 377, and later in this chapter, pages ii, 380, 383. James Fraser, the noted sculptor, as a boy of fifteen, watched the making of this larger model, which (he has told me) "stood on a 20-foot stage."—One of my father's assistants then was the Swiss painter, Frank Charles Peyraud, still of Chicago, in 1926.

ward. I am at my post every instant—goaded with work and harassing anxieties."

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE RECALLS "ONE OF THE HIGH AND ELDER GODS"

A glimpse of him in Chicago at this time is recorded by one of our most genial and indigenous of editors, whose militant quill has ever been sharpened with humour in his zest for social good. In January, 1927, William Allen White wrote for this memoir:

"When I was an elderly youth in my early thirties, just sipping greedily a little almost surreptitious fame, I remember Steele Mac-Kave as one of the high and elder gods. I saw him once in the old Chicago Press Club, or was it at some emporium of good cheer, of which many flourished in those World's Fair Days? I have a picture of a man with bright piercing eyes amid a poll of black hair: a figure! He was the actor-author-a man of fame, of parts, of presence, and of distinction. Author of Hazel Kirke, he moved in the Chicago circle of that day among rather younger men, the two Fields, Eugene and Roswell, Opie Read, Moses P. Handy, Gunsaulus, the preacher, Sol Smith Russell, the actor, who was my host: MacKave moved in that circle, I say, 'like one who treads alone the banquet hall deserted.' For he was of another world.—So that day, when I met Steele MacKave in all his glory and in all his gentle pomp as befitted a first class god, I fell down and worshipped. My worshipping eyes saw little but the noble dignity of his kindly face, his black mane and his flashing eyes. I can just hear the resonance of his modulated voice—a public voice, but softly ingratiating. But what he said—it mattered little compared to what he was!"

1,500 PERFORMERS: FIRST VOCATIONAL SCHOOL OF "CIVIC PAGEANTRY"

"I know how great the odds are against me," my father had written, a year earlier, "but I go ahead as though I had none at all."—At that time, he had been planning ahead for "six months of rehearsing," based on his experienced insight of the practical; for the many hundreds, even thousands, of acting and choral participants, organized in relays of 1500 a performance, during five months, must needs be drawn from the non-professional citizenry of Chicago. Such a body of performers, to become responsibly disciplined for their continuous labours, would demand strong incentives—implied in the opportunity not merely personally to "show off," or to earn a moderate stipend, but to secure for themselves individual development in art and desirable social contacts: in other words, thoroughgoing, organised schooling.

In this respect, Steele MacKaye instituted at Chicago, in February, 1892,—more than a generation in advance of later tentative

Plate 89, Chap. XXX.



GEORGE C. HAZELTON

Dramatist. (cf. pp. 344, 370.)



WALTER DAMROSCH
Composer. (cf. p. 325.)



JULES GUERIN
Painter. (cf. p. 318.)



EDGAR LEE MASTERS

Poet. (cf. p. 419.)

RISING YOUNG ARTISTS OF THE 'NINETIES Commentators on the Art of Steele MacKaye



A SCENE FROM THE SCENITORIUM PRODUCTION (FEB., 1894.)

From a photograph reproduced in "The Western Electrician" (Feb. ?, 1894.)

(cf. p. 438.)

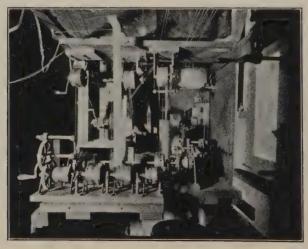


A Scene from the Spectatorium Large Model (1893)

Columbus' Caravels, Moored in the New World

From a photograph reproduced in "The Spectatorium Magazine"

Dummy: First Number, uncompleted, "May, 1893." (cf. p. 393.) Note the curved are of stage in foreground.



DRUMS FOR WINDING CABLES AND MOVING STAGES

From a photograph of the Spectatorium Large Model (1893)

Reproduced in "The Spectatorium Magazine" Dummy.

(cf. p. 377.)

attempts-the very first educational organisation of amateur participants in large-scale dramatic production, such as our latterday movement called "civic pageantry" has required and, on brief occasions, partially developed. Moreover, he accomplished this on a scale of expertness (creating, for a few months, a veritable working conservatory of amateur student-actors, drilled by professional artists) such as no other production in America, before or since, has ever attempted amongst the citizenry of a modern city. In so doing, his plan proposed to put these civic participants upon a practical basis of earned livlihood, whereby they could afford to turn from the pursuits of commerce to those of fine art.*

"FAR EXCELS BAYREUTH"-SEIDL; COMPARISON WITH ST. LOUIS FESTIVAL, 1914

At the time, the only analogous plan at all comparable with it was the festival organisation of Wagner's operas at Baireuth, concerning which Anton Seidl then said: + "In the art of poetic spectacle, this project of the MacKaye Spectatorium as far excels Bayreuth, as Bayreuth excelled the drama of Wagner's predecessors."

Not again was there to be anything comparable in kind and scale, until 1914, when for each nightly performance, some eight to ten thousand citizens of St. Louis, under leadership of rarely enlightened civic organisers, and of artist-experts chosen for their experience, were rehearsed for several months to take part, out of doors, in a five-nights' civic-dramatic festival, of which it concerns this memoir to record that the dramatic architect and authordirector of the Masque of Saint Louis ‡ was the son of Steele Mac-Kave, who wrote in 1893 the chorals for his father's Spectatorium -that being the son's first apprentice-contribution to the art of communal drama. At Saint Louis, in 1914, however, there was no thoroughgoing organised school of a new theatre-art such as Steele MacKaye set on foot at Chicago in 1893, as portion of that prophetic "institution" which he was then planning permanently to found.

^{*} Cf. statement of Steele MacKaye on page ii, 374.

[†] Cf. statement of Steele MacKaye on page 11, 374.
† Cf. further statement of Scidl on page ii, 378.
‡ For a comment in 1914 (by the artist, Alfred Lamb), comparing the Saint Louis Masque with the Spectatorium of 1893, see page ii, 481. Cf. also, on page ii, 482, a like comparison, in 1916, by Henry E. Dixey, between the Spectatorium and the younger MacKaye's Caliban.—Associated with the symbolic Masque of Saint Louis, as a portion of MacKaye's total dramatic architecture of the festival, was the historical Pageant, written and directed by Thomas Wood Stevens, who has produced, with admirable taste, a large repertory of his excellent pageants, in America.

THEATRE-ARTIST AND SOCIAL EDUCATOR: A FIERY WELDING OF IDEALS "A CHORAL, DANCING, PANTOMIMIC AND DRAMTIC SCHOOL"

Adequately to chronicle the significances of that pioneer "community" theatre-school, to the present and future of its art, would require, in itself, a small volume. Some brief record at least is demanded here, in relation to the life-work of its projector.

In early February of 1893, the Chicago Inter-Ocean published an announcement headed Stage School of the MacKaye Spectatorium, containing these statements:

"On Feb. 13th there will be opened . . . a Choral, Dancing, Pantomimic and Dramatic School, where ladies, gentlemen and children of intelligence can receive a preparatory art-training for the stage, with the chance of obtaining a practical experience before the public in the production to be presented, the coming May. . . . The Dancing, Stage Department, and Pantomimic classes will be under the direction of Mr. Leon Espinosa and his assistants. Mr. Espinosa has had seven years' artistic association with the Grand Opera, Paris; he was also for seven years, Director of Mise-en scene and Pantomime at the Theatre Imperial at St. Petersburg; during four years he assisted Mr. Henry Irving, of the Lyceum Theatre, London. . . . The Choral Department will be under Mr. Frederick Archer. . . .

"Students of all departments will receive special instruction in dramatic action from Mr. Steele MacKaye. . . . Applicants will be examined, every day, from Feb. 6; 10 to 12 A. M. and 2 to 5 P. M.—Youths and small people especially desired. Those accepted will be given the advantages of this training free of cost, and those who prove capable will be given a salaried engagement for the coming summer. Only candidates whose social surroundings and intelligence render them desirable co-workers need apply.—For particulars apply to the Director General, Mr. Steele MacKaye."

YEARLY SPRING FESTIVALS; PUPILS PAID AND EDUCATED; PERMANENT LIVELIHOOD

Concerning this "free dramatic school," * the Inter-Ocean published an interview with its originator, who said:

"The MacKaye Spectatorium is now being constructed at 1 to 27 Fifty-sixth Street . . . to be made permanent; . . . a new production to be presented every Spring upon a scale never before attempted. . . . The school also will be maintained and no effort neglected to make it the finest free school for professional training in the world. . . . Never before has any school in the realm of art both educated and paid its pupils. . . . It is especially a pantomimic school, educating the student to understand and develop his natural resources of expression in physical action. . . . Elocution will not be taught. Those natural

* In the eligibility of students Steele MacKaye directed that no lines of creed, or of race, were to be drawn.

forms of expression which are vocal and pantomimic will be given special attention. There will also be tuition in dancing, singing, stage deportment, and in those manners and customs which have prevailed among various classes of society during the history of civilisation. The instruction will be, to a large extent, unique and fascinating to any artistic mind. . . . Lectures on the philosophy of expression and special training in harmonic action and dramatic expression will be given by me each week. . . . The idea of the school is one of the many new ideas which together constitute the project of the MacKaye Spectatorium, which in all its details, mechanical, scenic, musical, dramatic and architectural, has been devised by myself. It is the harvesting of a lifetime of study—a conception which would probably never have taken concrete form but for the grandeur of the occasion and the splendid courage of the gentlemen to whom I am indebted for this opportunity of realising my most ardent hopes."

"HARVESTING A LIFETIME"; THE ACORN OF A CENTURY OAK

The ideas he brought to this project represented indeed the cumulative experience and "harvesting of a lifetime."

This was the fifth occasion within eighteeen years * upon which MacKaye had set on foot the beginnings of a "conservatory" of the theatre-arts. On the chief former occasion, the theatre-school of his Lyceum Theatre, he was overwhelmed by the simultaneous tasks of building and launching a new theatre, equipped with unprecedented stage inventions. Then, in 1884-5, numerous inventions (among them a new type of sliding stage), though all ready to install, were not included + in his Lyceum Theatre, on account of time pressure and deficient finances. Some of those earlier inventions were now contributory to the much vaster synthesis of the Spectatorium, where again, as before, MacKaye was overwhelmed by tasks of building and launching a new theatre while simultaneously organising its conservatory.

To found this intricate institution, he must needs project himself throughout its multiple parts. The lobes of his individual brain were the expanding acorn which, over night, must—as by miracle uprear its giant oak of the centuries. That he so very nearly accomplished this was indeed miraculous. That the expansion of his individual powers into a thousand branches and blooms of the rising structure he was creating should at last burst the fibres of his

^{*}The former four occasions, in New York, were 1875 (46 E. 10 St.), 1877 (23 Union Square), 1884-5 (18 W. 23 St. and Lyceum Theatre), and 1885 (172 Lexington Avenue).—A letter (March 11, '93) from his old pupil, Prof. S. S. Curry, President of the Boston School of Expression, requested permission to take part in the School of the Spectatorium.

[†] Cf. page i, 466.

mortality, is not strange. In the following records one may glimpse the signs of this process in the tension of innumerable strains.

"OVERWHELMED WITH APPLICATIONS"; "THE SPECTATORIUM FEVER";
"SALARY CUT-1,000 EXPENSES"

"Dear Heart," he wrote to my mother in New York (Feb. 2, '93), "I am so crushed with cares and so distracted by anxieties that I can't realise the flight of days. . . . I cannot find an instant in which to make out my personal accounts with the Co. . . . It has been night and day work with countless disappointments. How I live is a mystery and almost a miracle. I have been trying to finish models, while attending to the multitudinous details of a dozen other departments. . . . Wire me every day about Ben, May and Helen. Tell Hazel I will give her a lovely watch, if she will practice faithfully. Have Percy write me just what he wants from Mr. Archer. . . . God keep you all!—S. M."

(A few days later): "I have only a moment. . . . Save all you can for emergencies.—Cholera may postpone all for another year—and there is the chapter of accidents to me—which considering the strain, should not be forgotten. . . . The Spectatorium school is overwhelmed with applications from the best people.* We shall secure the very finest material, and get exceptional artistic results. . . . Tell the precious children I bless them for their letters,—Remember, anxiety about any of you is very hard for me to endure.—Keep me constantly informed.—You must not wait for replies.—With deepest benedictions to each and all.—S. M."

(Feb. 14): My salary has been cut down-and I am forced to pay a thousand petty expenses, that should rightly be paid by the Co. But the vast expenditure—going beyond the million—necessitates economies which I must assist to secure.—What am I to do? . . . If I could only make a coup for the Company, and raise more money for our preliminary costs, I would put my bill in for furniture and tools which the Co. has been using and ought to pay for to me.—But under the dangerously delicate condition of our finances, I do not dare to dun the Co. for money they need for vital expenses. I can only wait, hope, and do my best.—You must do the same. It is depressing to realise how, after all, I cannot give you the free and happy mind I long to. . . . If I could arrange it, might it not be well for Percy to come out here and spend a month with Mr. Archer and myself upon this work? † In the presence of the model, he might get an easier inspiration. Would it, considering the vast importance of this thing to all, be too great an interference with his studies in New York?—With ever growing love.— S. M."

† Before this could be arranged, the disastrous panic had stopped all opera-

tions. Cf. his letter on page ii, 380.

^{* &}quot;With the Spectatorium structure under way," wrote the Pittsburgh Despatch (Feb. 28, '94), "hundreds of young men and women, gifted and ambitious, responded. The best were selected.—Chicago became inoculated with the 'Spectatorium Fever.'"

"JEHOVAH" TURNS OFF THE RHEOSTAT; "TOTAL" (FEB. 20) "\$1,036,074"

The spell cast by that "presence of the model" is recalled, thirtythree years later, in this reminiscence by Prof. Emelius Clark Dudley, of Northwestern University, who has written me:

"On a wonderful evening, in 1893, I witnessed the discovery of America—in your father's Lilliputian model! I recall two scenes: a frightful storm at sea, and moonlight on the luxuriant tropical island where Columbus landed.—I had come there by invitation of Mr. Murray Nelson, Senior. Several ladies and gentlemen were present. We rubbed our eyes—certain that we saw a real vision and real natives, who stood in awe of the apparition of Columbus, the crew and the caravels. . . . Your father stood there like a veritable creator: a God directing the event. For a moment, no one questioned the reality. It was the moon!—Then presently your father shouted, not in the traditional words of Jehovah: 'Let there be light!'—but, in words of thunder: 'Turn off the rheostat on that moon!' . . . That 'rheostat' brought us down again to earth. Our heads had been in the stars, and our feet on the tail of a comet."

In addition to all his other tasks, it was then my father's duty to prepare definite figures and specifications for construction, organisation and management. In the Appendix I have included a specimen of such figures, to convey some idea of his practical business capacities, as well as for the interest of items listed, especially of the \$30,000 model:*

\$30,000 MODEL: "SKY VISION, 27,000 SQ. FT., WITH MACHINERY FOR SAME"

In another long business document,† in which Steele MacKaye agrees "to furnish for the MacKaye Spectatorium . . . stage properties, fixtures, etc.," occur the following items, including a Celestial Vision in Sky—"27,500 sq. feet:"

"Granada Stage No. 2. As per model—keeping houses on O. P. side below 47 ft. Flag and flagstaff, also all trees and shrubbery included. . . .

*Referring to this new, extraordinary model (which finally cost \$30,000), Steele MacKaye said in an interview (February, '93):—"In a few weeks, I expect to give a press exhibition of the new models, which are of immense size."—For his first smaller model—(about 6 by 4 feet), to make which he shut himself up in his work shop, during the winter and early spring of '92, he himself raised the \$5,000 to construct it, and so launched the Columbian Celebration Co. (cf. page ii, 336). But that model was too small for use in construction purposes. Hence the need for this second much larger model (15 by 10 feet), which was successfully exhibited, to the press, March 19, '93. Cf. pages ii, 380-383.

† Signed by Murray Nelson (Vice Pres. of C. C. Co.), Sidney C. White, Jr. (Secretary) and Steele MacKaye—the three original incorporators of the Com-

pany.

"Granada Stage No. 5. As per model—keeping it below 42 ft. . . . "Palos No. 1. As per model—with painted glass windows for church—trees and foliage included. . . .

"Palos-Lighthouse Tower. As per model—including arrangement for beacon light.

"San Salvador No. 7. As per model-with trees and foliage included.

Extra Pieces

- "Set piece on 1st Granada Fountain, as per model—with two figures—trees and foliage included.
- "Back Sky. 380 ft. x 100 ft., 38,000 square feet. "Back Vision. 275 ft. x 100 ft., 27,500 square feet.
- "Santa Maria. As per model-with machinery for working same.
- "Pinta. As per model-with machinery for working same.
- "Nina. As per model-with machinery for working same."

The rest of this very long report, itemises "Facts for Investors," "Average Daily Receipts," etc.

"WAGNER'S RAINBOW REALISED"—SEIDL; VICTOR HERBERT'S
PANTOMIME MUSIC

Meantime, the music plans were steadily progressing, and called forth this striking comparison with Wagner's Baireuth equipments, from Anton Seidl, as reported in the New York Evening Post, Feb. 20, 1893:

"Mr. Seidl will be heard all summer, with his orchestra in Chicago at the mammoth 'Spectatorium,' in Steele MacKaye's production, The World Finder. He is extremely enthusiastic about this undertaking, of which he said: 'It will inaugurate a new era in the history and the methods of stage spectacle.' . . . The stage is three times as large as the immense stage at Bayreuth. . . . The first scene is at Granada, the buildings of which are not painted on canvas, but are actual structures. . . . 'Mr. MacKaye's clouds, sunsets, and other phenomena of nature,' said Mr. Seidl, 'will surpass anything ever witnessed at Bayreuth. Indeed, here will be realised what Wagner dreamed of: the rainbow (in Rheingold), for instance, which in Bayreuth, as in all German capitals, was a failure, will here be a scenic marvel.'-Mr. Seidl dwelt on the delight Wagner would have felt could he have met such a master of scenic effect as Mr. MacKaye-with such millionaires to supply the funds; and he expressed his belief that this great experiment would ultimately lead to a western American Bayreuth Festival."

In my '93 diary (at 55 West 19th Street, New York) are the following records:

(Mar. 14): "Wrote to Mr. Victor Herbert.—(Mar. 16): "My 18th birthday. . . . I received from dear Father a present of 50 shares of

the stock of the Columbian Celebration Company. . . . Mother and I called on Mr. Victor Herbert, the well-known celloist, who is writing the pantomimic music for the Spectatorium. He played us some of the music, which is very fine. He lives at 1126 Park Avenue."—(Mar. 17): "Note from Victor Herbert (delayed)."—(Mar. 24): "At night, Hazel and I went to the Schmidt-Herbert concert at Chamber's Hall. Saw Mr. Herbert after it."

I remember vividly my conferences, at that time, with the young, slim, black-haired "celloist," who was afterward to become America's most popular composer. I remember his zest in playing his "pantomime music" for my father's Spectatorio, and the picturesque quality of his compositions. Twenty-three years later (Jan. 10, 1916), when I had written him concerning a proposed meeting in memory of my father, he wrote me:

"Having known your dear father very well indeed, I consider it a great honour to have my name added to those of the committee."

Eight years afterward, at lunch with him at the Lambs' Club, I recalled our earliest work together, in which he had also set a choral song or two of mine to music for the Spectatorium; and he exclaimed: "I am going to write you a tribute of my heart to your father's genius. I am rushed now, but I'll mail it to you within three weeks."—Within those three weeks, however, he had died, and a great outpouring of popular affection had expressed itself at his funeral (May 29, 1924).

1,000-TON STEEL ROOF; LARGE MODEL EXHIBITED TO PRESS, MARCH 19, '93

In the spring of '93, the Columbian Exposition was to open its gates to the world on the first of May. In March, under frantic haste, the Columbian Celebration Company was still striving to open the gates of the Spectatorium almost as soon as the great Fair. On March 12, '93, this item—concerning methods of steel construction then unprecedented—was "released" to the national press:

"The largest building ever erected in the world for amusement purposes is 'The MacKaye Spectatorium' at Chicago. . . . Its roof * is composed of 'I' shaped steel beams, built into immense trusses. These beams are bolted together as a truss; each truss is then raised to its position and, at an altitude of 170 feet, is placed on top of the bents

^{*}Cf. page ii, 397, concerning the wind accident which partially destroyed this roof, in process of being placed. See also Appendix for Note on "The Spectatorium Building and Sky-Scraper Construction."

by an immense two-arm, travelling derrick. The roof weighs over 1,000 tons and is capable of supporting a freight train of 40 loaded cars."

On March 19, '93, my father wrote to my mother:

"Dear Heart—The death of Christian * has been a horrible shock to me. I realise what an awful blank it leaves in my dear sister's life—and feel like a criminal that I, her only brother, should not be at her side at such a time. . . . But I could not have gone without risking health and hopes. . . . I exhibited the model to about 50 newspaper men to-day. They seemed pleased. I will send you to-morrow's papers. Arthur seemed overwhelmed. . . . I am delighted to hear such good news of Victor Herbert's music. I am trying to arrange to have Seidl, Herbert, Archer and Percy here for a couple of weeks in the early part of April. I will write as soon as anything is fixed. Meantime, to you, dear angel, unutterable blessings from—S. M."

"A WONDERFUL CREATION"—"WILL REVOLUTIONISE STAGE SETTINGS"; "TO
ART WHAT EIFFEL TOWER WAS TO ENGINEERING";
AUTHOR COMES FROM SICK-BED

This modest allusion to "50 newspaper men," who "seemed pleased," refers to the first exhibition of the large model to the press. This was, in little, somewhat like a dress-rehearsal "invitation performance" of the theatre; and since it was the only publicly reported production of some visual aspects of the Spectatorium (which was never to have its "first night"), I have included here these excerpts from most of the next morning (March 19, '93) Chicago newspaper reports † of it:

(Evening Post): "MacKaye's Big Show. Model of the Great Spectatorium Shown to the press.—It is a Wonderful Creation.—Inventions which will Revolutionize Stage Settings.

"In the loft of the old armory building, at 241 Thirty-ninth Street, yesterday afternoon, Steele MacKaye, the clever actor, playwright, inventor and projector of the MacKaye Spectatorium, took into his confidence about four score gentlemen, by unveiling before their wondering eyes the model, from which is being constructed the grand whole, on the lake shore. This model has been erected at one end of the long room, which was filled in with tiers of chairs. There was also a piano. The front of the model represented a miniature theatre.—At 3:30 o'clock, Mr. MacKaye, who left a sick-room to be on hand,

^{*} On March 17, '93, in New York, at the Normandie Hotel, Baron Christian von Hesse, husband of Steele MacKaye's sister Emily, had died. He is alluded to often earlier in this memoir.

[†] In New York, the Times, April 2, '93, contained a column article, "THE SPECTATORIUM, First Lucid Account of Steele MacKaye's Big Theatre," embodying the features here given.

took a seat on the prompt side, explained briefly the aims of the Spectatorium, and described the action as the various scenes changed.*

"As the first scene of La Rabida faded to blackness, there shone out from around the little proscenium arch a fringe of particoloured incandescent lights in globes. This, Mr. MacKaye's invention, is a curtain of light. By its manipulation the picture is concealed and a change of scene is made with no physical curtain. A change of the heavy sets can thus be made in forty seconds by the stage manager, who stands upon a platform fifty feet above the stage and simply presses a button. In all there are twenty-five stages, so telescoped as to be compact and easily separated.

"The second scene showed the little village near Granada, with the Alhambra on the hills beyond. Day was dawning, and the effect was marvellously real. One fairly felt the chill of the grey morning. A real breeze was blowing, and it flapped banners and bent trees very effectively. . . . Here the King and Queen come to receive the Alhambra from Boabdil and his Moors, and a grand fete takes place, in which the sports and pastimes of the day are faithfully given, even the musical instruments of that time being used .- (These were displayed in the hall.)-Columbus meets the King, his proposition is rejected, the monk appeals to the Queen, and she pledges her jewels to aid the navigator. Here the first act ends.

"The second act opens with dawn, at Palos, the three caravels riding at anchor. The sailors depart . . . a wonderful panorama. † Passing the old lighthouse, the town disappears . . . the caravels sail a seemingly trackless expanse of water. Then night, stars, then all again darkness. Another sunrise . . . the caravels becalmed in the tropics. . . . Suddenly a storm—tremendous even in the model. The waves dash high; darkness; the caravels become separated. Then the clouds break . . . and the rainbow! . . . At last dawns the great day; land is sighted: the three caravels ride safely at anchor in the New World . . . the meeting with the savages, and the planting of the Cross.

"At the conclusion, those present predicted that the Spectatorium would rival the World's Fair itself. Mr. MacKaye was showered with congratulations.—To-day the model was taken apart, 1 and from it will be built the scenery for the great building which will remain a permanent

^{*} For his Drama of Civilisation, 1886 (cf. page ii, 85, footnote), MacKaye converted the ancient "prompter's box" into a public pulpit of a Dramatic Chronicler, devised by him to give exposition to a sequence of pantomime. An analogous function was adopted by him at the Scenitorium production, in Feb. '94.—An evolutionary successor of this Dramatic Chronicler of Steele MacKaye, twenty years later, is the Pageant Chronicler, as used by Thomas Wood Stevens, quite independently devised by him for several of his historical

^{† &}quot;On the departure of Columbus' little navy," wrote the Herald, "the light from the little church of St. George sent a path of its rays across the bay to

the vessels, telling that a godspeed mass was being celebrated by the priests." ‡ Several photographs of this model appear to have been made, for line drawings from photographs were published with articles, March 20, '93, in the Chicago Tribune, Herald, Record, and Inter-Ocean, and are also contained in the MacKaye Spectatorium Magazine dummy. Cf. illustration in Chapter XXIX.

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feature of Chicago as a world mecca for artists. . . . It is safe to say that the Spectatorium will attract more attention during the Fair than did the Eiffel tower in Paris.* No description can carry even the least idea of the model. What, then, will be the great and complete whole!"

"MACKAYE'S TRIUMPH: GRANDEUR OF CONCEPTION, AND REALISATION BY ONE MAN ALL BUT INCREDIBLE"

"Mackaye's Triumph.† Model of his Spectatorium. A Marvellous Thing. . . . So perfect was the model in every detail that the miniature spectacle surpassed many spectacular plays given on a stage. The scenes only were presented.—But neither music nor actors were needed; for Steele Mackaye described the action of each scene; and, as the deep sympathetic voice of the master told the story of the theory, plans, trials and ultimate success; of the departure, and days of dread, despair, struggle and revolt on the sea, and of the morning when the cry of 'Terra! Terra! Terra!' from the Pinta announced that a New World had been discovered, the auditors saw before them the moving figures of the real drama of 1492, and heard in turn the demoniac voices and the divine strains of hope and victory. . . .

"In the first scene—a highway in Spain—Columbus finds succour after a long journey. Here the man who dared ideas so much in advance of his time is met by a mocking rabble, which is awed by his simple nobility. The monk, his champion before Isabella, here first meets Columbus. . . . The second act has four scenes: four days of dread, struggle, revolt and the discovery of land. . . . But no description can do justice to the grandeur of the conception, or to its marvellous realisation. That one man can combine the qualities necessary to the conception and realisation of such a production is all but incredible. Steele MacKaye has proven that he has these qualities. The Spectatorium is the result of his life's study and experience. . . . Judging from the model, the production will be the most advanced realisation of realism combined with the perfection of the ideal. The mystic music (symphonic, incidental and choral)—the darkness of night, representing the depths of despair, the light of the rising sun-the dawn of hope—all these are, in the truest sense, idealistic. . . . The scene on sea and land, the lighting and atmospheric effects, are in the highest degree realistic. The various scenes are glimpses of nature framed."

"REALISM IDEALISED; NO PAINTED SCENES; LIGHT INSTEAD OF PIGMENT" (Tribune ‡): . . . "The working model, less than one-twentieth the

† The preserved clipping of this article does not give name of the Chicago

newspaper.

^{* &}quot;This Spectatorio," said the Inter-Ocean, "will be to art what the Eiffel tower was to engineering."

[†] This Chicago Tribune article is illustrated by two scenes of the working model:—"Departure from Palos" (the church near left foreground; the caravel of three ships, close to shore, moving right, with bellying sails), and "How the Scenery is Worked" (a view, from photograph, taken behind the scenes, of the windlasses, cables, interlocking stages, etc.).

size of the production, was exhibited at the old Armory, Vincennes Avenue and Thirty-ninth Street, where for many months Mr. MacKaye has been hard at work upon it. . . . In the succession of splendid scenes each scene generally extends over an entire day. . . . The entire story is idealised, but is combined with the finest effects of realism ever brought into use in stage representation. . . . The step toward perfection in using light instead of pigment is strikingly revealed. . . . Already MacKaye has accomplished a revolution of stage lighting. . . . None of the scenery is painted. Every property is real. . . . The MacKaye Spectatorium, now building, occupies a space about 600 feet square. The cubic measurement of the scenitorium, or scenic department, from foundation to roof, is over 17,000,000 feet."

"UNIQUE AND IMPRESSIVE: TRUE CHARACTER OF MAN; COLUMBUS: THE MEANINGS OF HIS MISSION"; "THREE SPECIES OF MUSIC"

(Herald *): "Scene and Song Unite. Art Tells a Story of Columbus. Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium Explained by Originator of the Great Idea.

"To Steele MacKaye will belong the glory of revealing the story of Columbus, his hopes and his misgivings, his struggles and his triumph, told in a way at once unique and impressive. Music and art, scene and song will leave an impress of the true character of the man Columbus, of the meaning of his mission and the forces and circumstances which confronted or aided him.—All this will be realised by the people of the earth who come here during the Fair.—Mr. MacKaye thus described the purpose yesterday:

"From the first my object has been to make an alliance between nature and art such as has never before been effected, and to utilise this alliance for the most impressive and inspiring illustrations of one of the grandest stories of human struggle and achievement which history reveals. . . . The spectatorio, a new form of scenic production, is a combination of spectacle and oratorio; from this it takes its name. The story of a spectatorio may be told either in spoken words, or in pantomime. From the colossal scale of the production it is best fitted for pantomimic work; although it may be most artistically divided between pantomime, for the more distant and extensive scenes, and speech for those which more nearly approach the public.

"There are three species of music employed in the spectatorio. First, the symphonic, which follows all the cosmic changes of the scenes and all the dramatic action of the story, interpreting the sentimental mood and meaning of each change. Second, the incidental music. This occurs in the scenes themselves and forms a part of the incident of the story, illustrating with instruments of the time, the music of the age and forming merely an archæological exhibit in musical art. Third, the choral music: an adaptation of the old idea of the Greek chorus, very much

^{*}This article in the Herald is illustrated by two views of the model scenes: "Ships leaving Palos" (with the last houses and low hills visible, at left and at back), and "Columbus in Sight of Land" (the three ships close in to the tropical shore and palm trees of the New World, at right).

enlarged in its scope and character by its association with the modern scene.

"The chorus is divided into two sections. One,-composed entirely of male voices and located in the Spectatorium proper, or audience chamber of the building, in plain sight of the public, represents the visible or material world, and gives expression to the sentiment of that world toward the historic events which transpire during the progress of the story .- The other section-located in the Scenitorium, behind the scenes, invisible, represents the mystic or ideal world.—Composed of male and female voices, it reveals the ideal view of the human story. When any great historic event has reached its climactic expression, the choruses celebrate it-the chorus of the Spectatorium from the material, and the chorus of the Scenitorium from the ideal point of view.—The invisible chorus performs also another function.—At the climax of a scene, it interprets the ideal value of the human act presented by the scenic picture; but during the progress of the story, the spiritual contentions among the dramatis personæ are suggested by voices of the invisible chorus. To this end, the Mystic Chorus is again divided into two sections: one-entirely of male voices-expressing the demoniac idea; the other—entirely of female voices—expressing the divine idea.—For instance, during the voyage of Columbus, when the great navigator and his crew encounter the meteors, the storms, the mirage, the alternations of hope and fear, which ultimately bred despair in the sailors,—the invisible chorus celebrates the contrasted emotions of Columbus and those of his crew. Thus, during the storm, the Demoniac Chorus sings the song of superstitious terror to the sailors, and they, hearing it, seek Columbus and beseech him to listen; but his ears are deaf to the songs of fear. As the diabolic song dies away in darkness of the storm, the Divine Chorus is heard singing the inspiring song of hope and faith to Columbus. This song he hears, and, seeking his crew, beseeches them to listen; but they, in their turn, are inaccessible to the song of hope: illustrating a spiritual truth: that every heart hears only that song which is akin to its own character.'

"A beautifully realistic scene was first shown, the convents of La Rabida on a mount, representing the Hill of Difficulties which Columbus had to climb. There appears the Vision of Columbus—a cross of light in the sky. Standing by the cross is the Saviour surrounded by an angelic choir. With one hand he is pointing to a globe of light on which are the dim outlines of the hemispheres. With the other hand he points to a group of Indians waiting for a deliverer. . . . The lighting system used in the Spectatorium is entirely new and has a marvellous effect, reproducing to perfection all the subtle light changes of nature."

(Record *):... "Prominent among the invited guests were Lyman J. Gage, Maj. Moses P. Handy, James W. Scott, H. H. Kohlsaat, Murray Nelson, E. W. Gillette, and Marshall P. Wilder. . . . After Mr. Mac-

^{*}This Record article is illustrated by two model-scenes—"Columbus fleet leaving the port of Palos" (the Church and houses visible on the shore, at left), and "A Glimpse of Vallambrosa."

Kave had described his Spectatorio, the audience assembled in front of the stage—a sheet of water, back of an opening (in a perfectly black wall) not more than 6 by 4 feet. On this small stage . . . only half of the Spectatorium scenes were given, the return of Columbus and his death not being attempted on the small model scale. . . . At a word from Mr. MacKaye, all lights were turned out, and the audience sat in perfect darkness. Two small doors then began to open slowly and disclose the first scene-La Rabida, the hills and trees near it, the sandy roads leading to it-in the distance the mountains and Spanish Along one of the roads were three crosses, characteristic of Spanish highways. The scene was not on canvas. Convent and hills were all in relief and realistic. . . . Hearty applause greeted Mr. Mac-Kaye with this scene. Twilight, dawn, midday, storm, rain were revealed. The canvas on Columbus' ships filled with the wind. . . . Scenes shown were the vision of Columbus, a street in Granada, Palos harbour, ships leaving Palos, on midocean, the storm, and arrival at San Salvador." *

FIRST USE OF MOVING CAPTIONS: "LETTERS OF FIRE," LONG ANTEDATING "MOVIES"; NO SCENE SHIFTERS

In the following New York article, the reference to the "great shields, with letters of fire a foot long, a sentence at a time" is noteworthy. This invention of Steele MacKaye antedated the modern motion-picture captions by a generation. Taken together with the rotary cloud pictures † of his invention, they establish in history the pioneer place of Steele MacKaye as probably the first artist of the theatre to demonstrate publicly these factors contributive to the motion-picture.

(New York Daily News, Mar. 13, '93): "The Spectatorium. One of Chicago's Marvels at the Columbian Exposition. . . . As expressed by Henry Watterson, the MacKaye Spectatorium promises to be the greatest feature of the World's Fair. By a rapid combination of twenty-five intermoving stages, the transformations take place: where, a moment before, were the battlements of Palos, the audience will gaze upon a limitless sea and witness terrific storms. . . . A curtain of light fills the proscenium arch like a sheet of flame. There are no scene-shifters. Though some of the set pieces on the stages weigh over 100 tons, one man moves them all while sitting at a switchboard. Electricity is the motor.—On each side of the proscenium arch are great shields, upon

*(Inter-Ocean):—"Mackaye's Big Show... Vast Machinery. The Great Spectacle Will be One of the Wonders of the Fair.—In the upper story of an old wooden building... Mr. Mackaye came from a sick bed, against the advice of his physician, to exhibit his wonderful creation and explain it to his guests. The little audience frequently expressed its enthusiastic appreciation by applause."—(This Inter-Ocean article is illustrated by two illustrations of the model: of "The Convent of La Rabida," "Columbus leaving Palos"—the three ships passing out to sea, beyond the lighthouse just visible on the left.) † Described by Frank Russell Green on pages ii, 319-324.

which, as the tableaux progress, the story of Columbus is told in letters of fire a foot long, a sentence at a time.—From the most magnificent roof garden in the world, there will be a splendid view of the World's Fair. . . . Over 1,200 performers will take part. Backed by Gen. Butterworth, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Gage and George M. Pullman, Chicago now boasts the greatest, most unique playhouse in the world. . . . In connection therewith, a special privilege company has been organised, of which Major M. P. Handy is President, Frank A. Burrelle, Vice President and General Manager, and Arthur L. MacKaye, Secretary.—The Spectatorium will open in May." *

"MACKAYE'S ART AND SCIENCE TOGETHER HAVE SOLVED ABSOLUTE REALISM: HIS UNPRECEDENTED ALLIANCE OF ART AND NATURE ACHIEVES "THE DESPAIR OF PAINTERS AND THE DELIGHT OF POETS"

In connection with MacKaye's aim for "an alliance between art and nature never before effected," the following excerpt of an article, from the Chicago Sunday Advertiser (March 26, '93), is significant for its perennial controversy of "art and nature"—"idealism and realism," causing a converted art-skeptic to exclaim: "Mr. MacKaye, your art and your science together have solved the problem of absolute realism."—The article is headed, "Not Art, But Nature":

"To students of art, the most remarkable feature of the Spectatorium is not the smooth-working mechanism, but the marvellously natural light effects. M. H. V. Bemis, a connoisseur known to the custodian of every important gallery in Europe and America, remarked enthusiastically during a recent exhibition of the model: 'That is not art; it is nature.'

"A few evenings ago, an Eastern amateur, unusually hard to please, whose views on art are published in leading periodicals, was dining in the Richelieu café, listening with polite expressions to Mr. Bemis' description of the Spectatorium, when Mr. MacKaye came in, fresh from his daily labours with builders, scene painters, electricians and capitalists. The inventor and amateur were introduced. A discussion of the universal art of the future was speedily generated, waxed warm, but was shortened unduly by Mr. MacKaye's having to attend a mechanical rehearsal at his shops, on Thirty-ninth Street.—'We'll go with you,' said Mr. Bemis, ordering a carriage. . . . The Eastern amateur was given a front seat in the miniature auditorium, fronting the model stage with its mechanism. This model probably cost as much as an

^{*}In an article, headed—"OBJECTS OF THE SPECTATORIUM," the New York Times stated (March 20, '93): "Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium will be one of the great, permanent attractions of the west. Capitalized for \$2,000,000, the entire stock is held by 100 people."—About this same date, there appears to have been an article in the N. Y. Evening Post; for, on Feb. 23, '93, my father telegraphed to my mother, in New York: "Mail me dozen Post articles to-day without fail. Important. S. M."

entirely new production of the spectacle at Niblo's, and would nearly fill the stage of the Eden Musée. Its stage is flanked on either side by complicated apparatus, upon which Mr. MacKaye holds patents granted in every civilised country. . . . Anything like an adequate description

of the scenes presented would require columns of space.

"The non-committal silence of the Eastern amateur lasted until the appearance of Palos by moonlight. He saw the clear white light of innumerable stars shining out of such a sky as only the Mediterranean reflects, and recognised familiar constellations. He saw red beams of light streaming from the little church, in which Columbus knelt, while Padre Juan Perez said mass . . . lights in windows, behind which the crews of the Santa Maria were singing tipsy songs. He saw the declining moon fade out . . . church and cottages disappear in the 'darkest hour before dawn'; saw the stars gradually grow pale—outlines of church and cottages reappear dimly—a faint glow on the eastern horizon deepen imperceptibly, till he beheld what has been sung since Homer's day—the grey dawn stealing over land and sea—the despair of painters and the delight of poets.

"This was the last touch. The Eastern amateur melted. Irresistibly he exclaimed: 'That is atmosphere, the first I ever saw in a picture. That is dawn itself. It is nature in her subtlest aspect. The picture is as true as any I have witnessed, before sunrise, standing on the high bank of the Hudson and gazing seaward.—Mr. MacKaye, your art and your science together have solved the problem of absolute realism.' . . . What was said thereafter was far too enthusiastic to look well in print. As the glow of the rising sun deepened, a land breeze sprang up, filled the sails of the Santa Maria, covered the calm sea with ripples, rustling the leaves of trees on the shore. Not only did their shadows move with the swaving of the branches, but they shortened as the sun rose higher, just as shadows do in nature. The little fleet stands out to sea. Palos recedes. The beacon is passed. The Santa Maria, her brave captain and the quaking crew are tossed on the mysterious sea. . . . The atmospheric effects are so true to nature that the working of this model, built on a scale of less than one-half inch to the foot, without music or speech, unaccompanied by the movement of dramatis personæ, renders the spectator oblivious to everything else. One experiences all the sensations of belonging to the age, being partner to the perils and the triumph of the World Finder.—It is rather too heavy a tax on one's imagination to determine the probable effects upon an audience of 10,000, when the completed spectacle is presented with all the accessories of finished actors and the music of great masters."

CURVED PROSCENIUM; STAGE OPENING IN ARC; NO FOOTLIGHTS, OR "BORDERS"; SUN AND MOON INSTEAD

As a landscape painter, since his early days of study under George Inness, MacKaye had closely studied these atmospheric lights of nature, seeking to represent them upon canvas. Now he had captured the spirit of light itself in a new organism of art

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evolved by his technical imagination.—On April 23, '93, a long, accurately detailed description of the Spectatorium, emphasising its electrical mechanism, was published (as a special dispatch from Chicago, April 21) in the Nebraska State Journal. This article based its account, in large measure, upon the actual completed great-scale machinery * of the Spectatorium itself, not simply on the exhibited model (which, directly after its March exhibition to the press, was taken to pieces, for shop construction purposes). From this article, the following are excerpts:

"One of these lights, the Sun, will have the lighting capacity of fifty arc lights, or 100,000 candle power . . . and can exactly represent any phase of dawn, day or twilight. . . . This is accomplished by the arc of a circle at the top of the Scenitorium. This arc has a radius of 220 feet and extends from the line of vision on the east side to the line of vision on the west, the sun at mid-day being very near the centre of the proscenium opening and directly over the top of the scene. The arc on which this luminary travels is parallel to the plane formed by the base of the scenitorium, or stage floor, and 150 feet distant from it. It carries this luminary from one end of the arc to the other and also carries an electric motor, by which the luminary can be raised or lowered at will and, if necessary, can be dropped clear to the bottom of the seven feet of water in the reservoir. . . The other light (of 20,000 candle power), representing the Moon, travels a similar but smaller arc and can be managed as easily as the greater light.

"The rear wall of the Scenitorium, or as much of it as can be seen from the audience, is not, properly speaking, a scene, nothing but the sky being represented. By a peculiar arrangement, not as yet explained,† there is made to appear on this background of sky the constellations of the southern hemisphere, each star being given its correct magnitude by the light which attends it, and each being set at its proper place in the firmament, from a chart furnished by the ablest astronomers. By a combination of these light effects may be obtained the subtlest modulations of tropical day and night—the effulgent light of the meridian sun, the silvery mellowness of moonlight, the hazy, murky atmosphere of approaching hurricane, with its thick bank of clouds obscuring the heavens, and the after-breaking of the storm. By entirely new devices, MacKaye obtains a curtain of mist, with real, pattering raindrops-the lightning in presence of the real rainbow, whichappearing on this curtain of mist-grows out of darkness into its full glory, and as gradually disappears.

"Other new mechanisms are the wave- and wind-makers, whereby the calm mimic ocean is stirred to faint ripples, accompanied by zephyr

† Cf. F. R. Greene's description on page ii, 323.

^{*} On June 4th (as reported in the Chicago Times, June 6, '93), Steele Mac-Kaye himself said: "The machinery is all made, and the details of the great Spectatorium show are in fair order, if only the building could be completed." Cf. page 405.

breezes, or is churned into white-capped storm waves, on which Columbus' caravels pitch and toss, amid roaring of the tropic simoon. . . . MacKave terms his curtain of light the 'luxauleator'-from two Latin words. A portion of this appliance, in plain sight of the audience, consists of a row of electric lights, placed round the proscenium opening, at the apex of a conical-shaped reflector, the base of which is turned outward. These reflectors, made of brightly polished nickel, appear like a row of bells, the electric lamp itself not being visible. . . . The proscenium opening is on a curve instead of straight, and all round the opening is a sombre coat of black paint. When a switch turns on the luxauleator, the lamps at apex of the reflectors glow with an immense voltage of electricity. This effects an optical illusion by which the blackness around the proscenium opening is carried into the rectangle itself and there appears to be a vanishing line, just at the mouth of these bellshaped reflectors. The same switch which turns on the luxauleator also cuts off the stage lights and the audience sit in a mellow, soft light, while the stage is apparently in dense darkness. In reality, however,

the stage is light enough for all practical purposes.

"Of the space comprised by the total theatre, or building proper, the audience chamber occupies one-sixth.—This audience chamber is situated in the centre of the semi-circle, which forms the stage area, and has a seating capacity of 10,000 persons. The stage proper, so to speak, is represented by an opening in the centre of the circular arc, this opening being 150 feet long by 70 feet high. . . . From the wall of the scenitorium (or stage department) which is nearest the audience, to the outer wall of the same, is a distance of 180 feet, making the stage portion of the building a space included within two concentric arcs, 180 feet apart. The measurement of the inside perimeter, or arc, from the back wall, on one side, around the front to the back wall, on the other, is 600 feet.—It will thus be seen that, while the stage has a perimeter of 600 feet, only 170 feet of this is open to the view of the audience. Herein lies a revolutionary feature of 'The MacKaye Spectatorium' stage. . . . The stage portion, or 'Scenitorium,' has a concrete * or cement bottom, and the sides are also cement to a height of eight feet, making a perfectly water-tight box of semi-circular shape. On the bed of cement are laid concentric lines of railroad track, enough rails being used to make a single line over twelve miles long, or a complete double track of six miles. . . . There are many other novelties in the way of lighting and atmosphering effects. In 'the MacKaye Spectatorium,' none of the footlights, so called, or border lights are used, their places being taken by two great lights, the Sun and Moon, and by numerous smaller lights which are necessary, but which do not appear to the audience at all."

^{*} According to Frank Russell Green's statement, Steele MacKaye intended to have this semicircular box rimmed at the top with glass, to perfect the illusion of the horizon line. Cf. page ii, 319.

BUILDING PROBLEMS; R. MODJESKI, SHIP MOTIONS; "FIFTEEN LARGEST ELEVATORS" FOR AUDIENCE

A hint of the infinite minutiæ which one man was called on "to combine in the realisation of such a production" is suggested by this specimen of his voluminous daily correspondence and conferences with his army of assistants, before the day of telephones. This letter (addressed to "1429 Michigan Ave., March 25, '93") is from a young civil engineer, son of the great Polish actress, Madame Helena Modjeska *:

"Dear Mr. MacKaye: I have been at the grounds, two days ago, and talked with Mr. Robinson t in regard to the machinery for moving the ships. It seems to me, the two smaller ships can be moved easily on the double rocker arrangement, but the large ship will have to have some kind of special contrivance. . . . The plans of the stages, showing their positions when pulled back out of sight, show the stage, Granada No. 1,—a paved street,—to be about 8 ft., 6 inches, back of the Granada sight line. Would there be any objection to bring the stage forward, within a foot of the sight line, as it is the case with several of the other stages?—I ask this because we ran against a foundation at the back end of the stage, and, by not running it as far as shown on the plans, we will avoid the difficulty. . . . They have started to drive the piles on my work, and if the weather is good we will make very rapid progress from now on. Mr. Mavor tells me that he cannot get as many men as we ought to have on the work, ! but he is getting ready to begin framing of the stages.-Very truly yours, Ralph Modjeski."

"At the MacKaye Spectatorium production," wrote the Chicago Inter-Ocean, "will be seen an historically exact reproduction of the Santa Maria, Pinta and Nina. These ships, now being constructed in the shops, will be practical working ships, or caravels, in every part. They will be manned by able-bodied seamen, and each rope and sail will duplicate, as far as possible, those of the original caravel. In one of the scenes, in midocean, the practical working of the vessels will be seen."

Another indication of the large-scale construction problems may be gathered from this item in the Boston Journal (April 20):

"Fifteen of the largest elevators ever built are now being constructed at Chicago for 'The MacKaye Spectatorium.' These elevators will convey the people to the various sections of the auditorium, and to the vast

^{*}Madame Modjeska was an old friend of my father. Eight years earlier she had made some tentative arrangements for appearing at his Lyceum Theatre, New York, under his management.

[†] Cf. footnote on page ii, 322.

[‡] Cf. statement of policeman on page ii, 467.

galleries, roof-gardens, restaurants and tower of the building.—They are to have a carrying capacity of 10,000 persons per hour, and are guaranteed for velocity and absolute safety. This is the largest elevator contract ever made, and these elevators will in themselves be an exhibit, more remarkable than anything in this kind at the Great Fair."

This was the first time that any theatre had ever been constructed, with elevators to carry the audience to their seat-sections.

YOUNG SCULPTORS AND PAINTERS: LORADO TAFT, CHILDE HASSAM;
WORLD'S FAIR FOCUS OF ART RENAISSANCE

The designing and decorating of the World's Fair buildings had focused, at Chicago, in a large group of young artists, the stuff of a renaissance in American art, which has been passed on to this day in architecture, painting and sculpture; as it would also have burgeoned in the theatre's art through the Spectatorium, but for its giant failure—in spite of which, many of MacKaye's revolutionary methods, there first tested, have entered anonymously into our theatre's after-growth.

Among American architects, John Root (who was called "the father of the Columbian Exposition") and his partner Daniel H. Burnham, with Charles Follen McKim, Frederick Law Olmstead and Frank D. Millet, were chiefly instrumental in centring upon the Exposition an unprecedented creative co-operation of American artists, including such painters as E. H. Blashfield, J. Alden Weir, C. Carroll Beckwith, Edmund Simmons, Robert Reid, Kenyon Cox, and such sculptors as Saint-Gaudens, Barnard, Macmonnies, French, Adams, Borglum, Taft.—Several of these artists were my father's personal friends, with some of whom his Spectatorium plans were tentatively associated. Among the sculptors young Lorado Taft has since then become eminent in creating noble sculpture for Chicago and America. In the ripeness of his powers, he has written me (1926) these words of recollection:

"My dear Percy: Your wonderful father came one day to my Chicago studio, to talk of some sculpture for his great Spectatorium. His handsome figure and fine eyes attracted me before I realised who my visitor was. But when he began to unfold his plans, I felt that I was enjoying a marvellous dramatic presentation all by myself. As he described the groups which he already so distinctly visualised, he would momentarily play the different parts, and I remember—as if it were yesterday—the graceful sculptural poses which he took, and the flashes of his changing expression, as he personified the different characters he desired represented. I felt then that he was one of the most dynamic personalities

I had ever met. I still feel so, and prize the memory of that vivid half hour as one of the high-lights in my life."

Among the younger groups of artists, with whom Steele Mac-Kaye used then at times to forgather, was the distinguished American painter, Childe Hassam, who painted in 1893, from the architectural elevation designed by my father, a large water colour of the Spectatorium exterior, atmospheric in its sensitive colouring. Signed by Hassam in '93, it is now owned by this biographer, and is here reproduced, as an illustration, in Chapter XXVIII.

"I first met your father"—Mr. Hassam himself has written me—
"at the Auditorium Hotel (where I was staying in 1893), in the company
of Sullivan, architect of the Auditorium, which was then just completed,
the best hotel in Chicago.—Of course I was immediately taken by your
father's striking and pleasing personality. There were then a number
of architects, sculptors, painters, at work on the Fair, and our group
used to dine in the Auditorium Café.—Regarding the Spectatorium
painting, whatever skill in handling the water colour wash—and the
colour is mine—the rest is your father's architectural ideas."

Thus, thanks to Childe Hassam's brush, a visual relique, imaginatively appealing, has survived the ruin of my father's dreams.

FIRST THEATRE ARTS MONTHLY OF EDUCATION: DRAMA, MUSIC, PHILOSOPHY, MECHANICS

Among a few other reliques, which betoken his inner visions housed by that exterior, perhaps the most pensively suggestive is a "dummy" of the monthly magazine, which—as planned by my father—was to have become the literary organ of expression not only of the Spectatorium during the World's Fair, but also of that institution thenceforward, as a permanent focus of the arts of the theatre in America.

"Viewed from an educational standpoint," it states, "this representation may be regarded as the inaugural achievement of a new epoch."

In conception, it was an illustrated magazine, combining in its scope the visual artistry expressed to-day in the Theatre Arts magazine, the musical scholarship of the Music Quarterly, the philosophic emphasis of Hibbert's Journal, and the inventive interests of The Scientific American, all leavened by a religious spirit of non-sectarian humanism, voiced through trenchantly sincere and vividly entertaining stylists of American journalism.—With a potential sale of at least a million copies during the World's Fair performances, with some thirty to forty thousand seat-holders a day, the magazine was planned in the best sense as an educational journal,

which should not—and needed not—to compromise its content to any ignorance or prejudice implicit in those masses, who came to the great Exposition frankly seeking (often at personal sacrifice) sources of development for themselves in knowledge, beauty and human aspiration.

This magazine, thus conceived and half-launched by Steele Mac-Kaye, was the first instance, in the English-speaking world, of a monthly journal devoted to the art of the theatre as an educational project; and the only instance, I believe, on record of any monthly magazine dedicated to the popular interests of an art synthesis in society, comprising the dramatic, musical, philosophic and mechanical in its aim and content.

"MACKAYE SPECTATORIUM MAGAZINE"; REVIVAL OF TRCUBADOUR MUSIC

Before me, as I write these words, lies the "dummy" (one of two existent copies), with its light-brown cover, decorated above, on either side, by a dark and an illumined hemisphere of night and day, and below by an outline reproduction of the Spectatorium. On the cover is printed the following inscription:

"The
MACKAYE SPECTATORIUM
MAGAZINE

MAY
—CONTENTS *—

Supreme Moments
Lasting Worth of the Occasion
The Heart of a Great Mystery
A New Order of Production
The Humanity of Music
Playing with the Stars
The Ideal Use of Realism
A New Arena for the Arts

THE WORLD FINDER

1893
Published By
THE COLUMBIAN CELEBRATION Co., CHICAGO

VOL. I

Price 25 Cents

No. 1"

^{*}These "contents" do not mention articles on the Dance and on Costume, for which notes are given in the "dummy."—The last of the contents, *The World Finder* was to comprise the whole (or excerpts) of the scenario-libretto written by my father and myself.

In a prefatory note, are the following data concerning the building:

"The MacKaye Spectatorium is the largest structure ever erected for the alliance of the arts in the domain of drama and music. It has a frontage of 500 feet, a depth of nearly 400 feet, an altitude of 270 feet. Together with its studios and power houses, it occupies an area of over 360,000 square feet.—In architectural design, it is a combination of the Spanish Renaissance and Romanesque. Its stately façade is enriched by many noble designs in sculpture. The grand entrance archway is about 100 feet in height, with a span of 65. . . . Its audience chamber will accommodate about 10,000 people; its scenic department, in area over 100,000 square feet, is equipped with 25 automatic, telescopic stages. . . . The lighting system is absolutely new in design and effect. . . . A vast sky, 400 x 120 feet high . . . presents the constellations of the southern hemisphere precisely as they appear on approaching the West Indies in the 20th latitude, in which Columbus made his great discovery. . . . The power for working the mechanism exceeds 1600 horse power. . . . The building is located on the Lake shore, at the north entrance of the Columbian Exposition grounds, in Jackson Park. It is two blocks from the Illinois Central R'v and the Cottage Grove cable cars on 56th St."

The "dummy" contains eighteen pages of illustrations.* A note on the eighth picture (representing old instruments) states:

"The performances at 'The MacKaye Spectatorium during the forthcoming memorable summer, will illustrate practically the indebtedness
of the present to the past in matters of art. . . . In the domain of music,
this feature will receive special attention. Not only will old instruments, described in this article, be seen, but their tonal resources will be
made manifest, as well as the method of their employment by the troubadours. The music of the period will also be reproduced in strict accord
with historic tradition.

"A NEW EPOCH IN PROGRESS OF ART CULTURE THROUGH CENTURIES"

"The contrast afforded by the use of modern orchestral and choral music of the highest type should likewise prove as fascinating as it is

^{*1—}Spectatorium Ground-plan; 2—Transverse Section, on centre line; 3—Convent of La Rabida; 4—Santa Fe, with Alhambra and Granada in Distance; 5—Palos; 6—Caravel in Midocean, with Rainbow; 7—San Salvador, or "Cat's Island"; 8—Nine Ancient Instruments of the Troubadours; 10—Armour of Columbus; 11—Eight figures in Spanish costumes; 12—Three Figures in Costume; 13—Mediæval Surplice; 14—Seven figures in costume; 15—Six soldiers, with ancient engines of war; 16—Eight soldiers (2 equestrian) with armour and implements; 17—"Drums for Winding Cables and Moving Stages"; 18—"Rheostats for Regulating the Electric Lights."—(Illustrations 10 to 16, inclusive, are included under an article entitled "Costume in Spain in the 15th Century," of which only a page and a half is printed in the "dummy.")

instructive, besides illustrating the progress of art culture through the centuries.—Viewed from an educational and popular standpoint, this representation of *The World Finder* may indeed be regarded as the inaugural achievement of a new epoch in the history of combined scenic, dramatic and musical art, linked together by new, yet indissoluble ties."

Fortunes have been devoted in bequests to museums, for the static collection and exhibition of the arts and crafts of the ages. But here, for the first time, was a fascinating and practical plan for dramaticly imbuing such exhibits of history with the creative life of artistry and imaginative growth.

The implications of the above brief note, in educational afterinfluences throughout the realm of music in America, spreading from that focus of millions at the Exposition in '93, are exasperatingly splendid: as are also the comparable plans of my father for the vast scale development in America of those varied folk-dances of the ages which, beginning expertly to be taught to the studentparticipators of his Spectatorium School, he had planned to extend to all phases of the folk arts of the dance, in the yearly festivals to be projected by his permanent institution at Chicago.

FOLK DANCES: "BRAWLS":—FIRE, CANARY, NAPKIN, ETC.: CHICA, FANDANGO, ETC.

In the "dummy" of *The MacKaye Spectatorium Magazine*, some phases of the folk dances, in rehearsal for *The World Finder* production, are touched upon in the note for an article, entitled *Dances of the Fifteenth Century*, from which these are some few excerpts:

"In strict sense of the word 'dance,' there were no dances during the Fifteenth Century. . . . The rhythmic movements of the body to music were then merely the spontaneous actions of the head, torso, or limbs, which flowed from the momentary feeling of the dancer. The cooperative activity of a body of dancers was generally allegorical, illustrating some social custom or religious rite. These movements were called Branles, or (translated) Brawls, of which there were many differing forms:—The Fire Brawl, danced with lighted torches; the Canary Brawl, with live canary birds; the Wooden Shoe Brawl; Napkin Brawl; Hermit's Brawl; Double Brawl; the Candlestick Brawl; but most interesting was the Branle Coupe, or Branle Endiable—Devilish Brawl.

"According to authentic traditions, there will be reproduced in 'The World Finder' this dance, as executed in Flanders, Aix la Chapelle, Genoa, and all through Spain during the 15th Century. . . . According to Thoinot Arbeau, the first portion was danced to a music light and

spirited in rhythm, crescendo in movement, increasing in rapidity until it became literally furious. Some dancers carried table-napkins, bouquets, single flowers; some, rosaries; others—large round cakes, surmounted by holy figures. Soldiers joined in with their Pertuisanes and Halberds, stressing the rhythm by clink of their steel; others danced with huge cart wheels.—This 'Branle Endiable' began on the floor, mounted to barrels, chairs, benches and three-legged stools. . . . The Rustic Dances were the Fandango and the Regalade. The Fandango originated from the 'Chica,' danced in Spain until 1555. The Moors, in 1091, brought from Africa the 'Chica' . . . which gradually moderated into the graceful Spanish movement of the Fandango, which still bore a suggestion of the old African abandon. In this form the 'Fandango' will be reproduced in 'The World Finder.' . . . We shall defer until our next issue the descriptions of the Court Dances of the same period."

There was, of course, no "next issue," but this record of the "dummy" magazine remains historically significant.

THEATRE-ART FESTIVALS, 1893 AND 1916; MASQUE AND SPECTATORIO;—
23 YEARS BEFORE CECIL SHARP

Here, then, in 1893, Steele MacKaye's plans and rehearsals for his Spectatorium definitely placed the historic art of the folk dance in the synthesis of the theatre's art, in a way which antedated by twenty-three years the first consummation of that kind in a modern theatre-art festival, which occurred in the Interludes devised by his son (this biographer) for his Shakespeare Tercentenary Masque, Caliban, produced in 1916 at the City College Stadium, New York, with 2000 participants (and in 1917, at the Harvard Stadium, with 5000), wherein—among exemplars of other racial folk dances—the scholarly attainments of Cecil Sharp, with the joyous clarity of his disciplined training of English folk dances, were given their first opportunity for co-operation in the structural harmony of a new dramatic organism.

That organism, devised by the younger MacKaye,—his "Masque," Caliban,—new in several basic elements of structure, was more kindredly related to the "Spectatorio" of The World Finder than to any other dramatic species. Yet for Caliban (conceived for a theatre ideally existent only in its author's imagination) two great stadiums had temporarily to be reconstructed from their football functions—at a total production expenditure of over \$200,000—for a few brief weeks' existence; simply because there existed nowhere in America—or in the world—any theatre for its production in any wise comparable to that which once, in

1893, imminently existed, of steel and electricity, a well-nigh perfect instrument, and the only one (of indoors) yet conceived, for such dramatic festivals of organic folk-art,-born from the imagining will of Steele MacKave.*

Amid such activities, in new forms of art, journalism, engineering, construction, etc., preparatory to the then apparently secure opening of the Spectatorium in May, Steele MacKaye stated in March of '93, looking back upon former uncertainties:

"As I look back now upon those days of terrible suspense, when the many turned from my enterprise with a smile or sneer of derision, I realise the splendid public spirit which inspired a small group of Chicago capitalists to undertake my project for their city. It is an appalling task I have undertaken, and I feel that I would be willing to sacrifice a dozen lives, if I had them, to realise the hopes which these generous men have entertained for the Spectatorium."

At the moment of his statement, the scheduled time for completing that "appalling task" was only six or eight weeks off.

CATACLYSMS-STRIKES, SNOW, ZERO, CYCLONE, ROOF BLOWN OFF-DELAY OPENING TILL JULY

As if, however, the problems of time and human co-operation were not in themselves sufficiently drastic, there now occurred a cataclysm of accidents, natural and national, giganticly staggering in their combination.

The furious weather conditions of that winter and early spring were almost unexampled, even in weather-mad Chicago.—Tempest, deep snow, icestorm, bitter temperature † far below zero, stopped all work on outdoor construction for many days at a time. During one appalling snow cyclone, part of the Spectatorium roof (which weighed, in total a thousand tons), while still in process of being placed by derricks, was blown off by the power of the tempest, to fall in a wreck of steel some two hundred feet below. ‡ To such accidents of nature were added a turmoil of strikes and labour troubles, requiring tact, patience and money to allay.

* On a structural comparison between The World Finder and Caliban a

pertinent essay might be written. Here, and on pages ii, 479-483, there is space only for a few suggestive hints of record.

† "The winter and spring of 1893," Frank Russell Green wrote to me (Oct. 30, 1924), "hurt the Spectatorium with very severe weather; the ground was frozen, and piles for the foundations had to be driven through it."—Cf. page also letter of S. M., page ii, 367, regarding stoppage of all work by weather, for four days.

‡ William MacKay, the artist (son of F. F. MacKay), tells me, 1927, that he heard the roar, and saw the ruin, of that accident, which killed several workmen. The same cyclone, he says, twisted the Fair's restaurant building one-third around on its foundations.

FINANCIAL "PANIC OF '93" PARALYSES NATION

The problems of construction, human labour and natural accidents were, however, as nothing to a sudden paralysis of national finances which now froze all the arteries of commerce and capital.

Three hundred thousand dollars more in bonds, of the eight hundred thousand subscribed the previous summer, were now required in cash, in order that the Spectatorium should open in May with the World's Fair, and begin to recoup the expenses of its construction. So severe, however, was that long remembered "panic of '93," that for several weeks millionaires could not cash-in their pocket expenses. Steele MacKaye, though indomitable, could not then liquidate a cent in cash of those bonds; yet, even in those terrible straits of finance, he succeeded in securing signers for two hundred thousand dollars more, completing a total of a million subscribed for the Spectatorium. This feat, however, but postponed the end, for purposes of the World's Fair. Only cash could meet the emergency of an inexorable opening, six weeks away—or failure.

MARK TWAIN "ON HIS BACK"; CASH UNPROCURABLE; WORLD'S FAIR SIX WEEKS OFF

Another valiant American of arts and letters, who was then desperately beset, has attested to the dire straits of that panic, in relation to his own career. At a banquet to his friend and benefactor, H. H. Rogers, Mark Twain stated:

"In 1893, when the publishing Company of Charles L. Webster, of which I was financial agent, failed, it left me heavily in debt.—If you will remember what commerce was at that time, you will recall that you could not sell anything, and could not buy anything, and I was on my back; my books were not worth anything at all, and I could not give away my copyrights. Mr. Rogers had long enough vision ahead to say, 'Your books have supported you before, and after the panic is over they will support you again'; and that was a correct position. He saved my copyrights, and saved me from financial ruin. . . Otherwise I would now be living out-of-doors under an umbrella, and a borrowed one at that."

But Mark Twain was more fortunate than Steele MacKaye in not needing to meet an inevitable date, in order to save his life-work. George M. Pullman * regarded MacKaye with a faith of "vision ahead" equally generous with that of Twain's benefactor toward the great humorist; but Pullman, too, was then powerless to cope with the Nemesis of "six weeks ahead." By the crisis of the '93

^{*} Cf. page ii, 329.

panic the Spectatorium, as a World's Fair asset, was doomed; but, for Steele MacKaye, the word "doom" was not in the dictionary, nor its meaning in his mind. Three terrible months were to drag on, over brief ascents of hope and declivities of despair, before he would acknowledge the existence of defeat—which even then, in bowing to outwardly, he inwardly defeated.

\$250,000 TO RAISE IN 10 DAYS—OR FIASCO; NAME CHANGED TO CHICAGO SPECTATORIUM

In the beginnings of the mounting crisis, he wrote to my mother in New York (April 4, '93)—a letter revealing the further self-sacrifice of his own name,* in connection with his greatest enterprise:

"Dear Heart-I am too tired to write much. I enclose a check. Save all you can for there is no knowing what may happen. The awful weather of the winter and the accidents caused by wind have delayed the opening of the building until the 1st of July.-Meantime, if I don't raise \$250,000 † more within ten days, we shall be obliged to stop, and the greatest enterprise of this country will prove a fiasco.—I hate to write this, knowing you are already ill with care; but the time has come when I can no longer conceal it, and you may as well be prepared for the worst. What I have been through no human being can ever imagine. My will sustains me, and I am resigned to my fate.—I have sent you all my savings, and shall send all I can, up to the last moment. Hoard for future possibilities. Meantime all may go well. So don't borrow trouble, but be prepared to bear bravely and cheerfully whatever destiny decides .- Say nothing of this to any one but Percy. In order to raise more money, I am going to change the name from the MacKaue to the Chicago Spectatorium. Money is very hard to get. The whole country is on the verge of bankruptcy, and men here will not invest as readily for what appears an individual enterprise and glory, as they will for that of the community with which they themselves are identified .- I have done the wise thing. This change increases my chances of carrying the affair through a hundred fold. Let us hope it will not be in vain.—Courage and good cheer! Deepest love to all. In wildest haste. —S. M."

Of that moment, and of the months before it, my mother wrote, in after years:

"He worked, with an insane energy, for weeks and months, never leaving his workshop in his intense eagerness to get the models done, his illness increasing always, but he would come, from time to time to

^{*} So, in 1879, he had put aside the name of "MacKaye Theatre" and substituted for it "The Madison Square Theatre." Cf. page i, 299.
† He did raise \$200,000. Cf. his statement on page ii, 403.

New York.—One dreadful day, in the Spring of 1893, an expressman brought me a bundle. It contained \$600 in bills and a letter from your father, telling me to make it go as far as I could, as it was the very last he should ever have from that enterprise.—This was in New York, 55 W. 19th Street. I went on to Pittsburgh * later, and then to Chicago."

In the very midst of his crisis, as ever remembering his children's anniversaries, he telegraphed to his son, James, then working his way through Harvard, on his twenty-first birthday (April 8th): "Good-bye, boy! Long life and great luck to the man!"—Two days earlier, he had wired to me at New York, in gracious placation of my feelings, during some last throes of choral-writing: "Changes in your chorals suggestion only, more clearly expressing my ideas."

In reference to his letter of April 4th, the carrying out of his determination there mentioned was thus recorded in the Chicago Daily Globe (April 9th, '93) under caption of "The Name of the Spectatorium is Changed":

"At the Union League Club, last night, a dinner was given by the directorate of the Columbian Celebration Company for the purpose of making a report on the work accomplished. This report was made by Steele MacKaye, who sprung a sensation at the close of his address. . . . The following is a verbatim report of that portion of his speech: "'Chicago has now pledged over \$1,000,000 for the completion of the Spectatorium. . . . The directorate of the Columbian Celebration Company did me the honour to give my name to this building. I appreciated profoundly the opportunities their action afforded me to connect my name with an occasion which is sure to become historic; but after a hard struggle with the natural pride of old Adam within me, I realised that there was a worthier thing to be done. -In recognition of the unexampled public spirit of this generous city, I have deemed it but just to substitute its name for my own in connection with this institution, and therefore, upon my motion, the directorate has reconsidered its former action and has rechristened this creation, changing its name from 'The MacKaye Spectatorium' to 'The Chicago Spectatorium.'-Apropos of this action, I am sincerely glad to subordinate the rights usually accorded the inventor to my personal obligations as a man. And now I pledge you my word that I shall work as hard for the success of 'The Chicago Spectatorium' as I could possibly have done had it borne my own name.; "

A THEATRE-ART COINCIDENCE: NORMAN BEL GEDDES: A LOST VISION PROJECTED

How hard he continued to work, baffled but undaunted, can only be hinted by these brief records, which suggest the flow and ebb, the *To visit her son, Harold, who was then in business there.

glimmerings of light and darkness, during those final weeks in the material collapse of gigantic dreams.

By a significant coincidence, at that very time, in that midwestern region, not far from Chicago, there was born an American theatre-artist whose genius in vast-scale production, though distinctively of his own quality and time, has expressed in our latter day an exuberance in the projection of large visual concepts strikingly kindred in spirit to that of Steele MacKave as a creative producer.—On April 27th, in that turbulent spring of 1893, Norman Bel Geddes was born at Adrian, Michigan. Thirty-four years later (having won signal repute, at home and abroad, by such acclaimed works as his productions of Reinhardt's Miracle in America. and of Jeanne d'Arc, in Paris), he has drawn for this memoir an imaginative reconstruction of a theatre-concept of my father—the vision of Columbus (cited on page 411), here reproduced. A reconstruction conceived in conference with my father's early collaborator, myself, it achieves-through Bel Geddes' own differing métier, irrespective of literal detail,—an expression peculiarly harmonious with Steele MacKaye's ideas of light and spacial grouping, shaped from a similar vortex of plastic vision.*—Amid those tragic days of the 'Nineties, at Chicago, I would that my father might have foreseen this projection of one of his lost dreams through another generation of the theatre's art.

These are some records of May, 1893—the first from the New York Dramatic Mirror, May 6th, headed "MacKaye's Misfortune":

"The Steele MacKaye Spectatorium, one of the proposed marvels of the World's Fair, is in a bad way. It has absorbed \$400,000, nearly as much more will be required to finish it, and under the most favourable circumstances it cannot be made ready for show before the closing days of the Fair. . . . The prospect of delay has frightened the speculators in its directory, and several have withdrawn. An attempt is being made to float \$400,000 of new bonds for the venture, but with little success. . . . Mr. MacKaye is still as cheerful as Mark Tapley in the same emergency, but the stockholders are moody. The Spectatorium was to have had as auxiliary features a barber-shop at a rental of \$150 a day; a Turkish bath establishment, that was expected to coin money; and a tower three hundred feet high from which, at fifty cents per head, the curious were to take a birds-eye view of the Exposition.†

^{*} In sending me his high-hearted gift, Norman Bel Geddes wrote to me in a note: "Dear Percy, Here is the drawing of my reconstruction of the final moment in your father's *The World Finder*. It might interest you to know that the same year that this tragedy caused the end of his life, my life began." † Cf. pages ii, 332, 333.

. . . A singular fatality seems to follow Steele MacKaye. When his inventive genius produces anything, somebody else reaps the profit; when he is in a fair way to do something for himself, there is inevitably a flash in the pan. . . . A huge unfinished building near the Exposition and a \$30,000 working model are all there is to show for months of preparation and enormous expenditures."

(MAY 4) "NEW TRIUMPH APPROACHING"; (11) "STRUGGLE INDESCRIBABLE; (12) "ON ITS LEGS AGAIN—TO OPEN AUG, 1"; (14) "MY MANAGEMENT OFFICIALLY VINDICATED"

Two days earlier, this telegram (May 4) to my mother in New York reflects that spirit of Mark Tapley cited above:—"Believe new triumph is approaching. Bless you for your dear letters. Shall write soon." . . . A week later (May 11th), he wired to her again:—"Situation unchanged. Don't expect much. Struggle indescribable. End approaching."

This approaching "end" was joyously announced in this telegram, three days later (May 14):—"Company, by vote of confidence, have placed entire management in my hands. Prospects steadily improving.

My personal management officially vindicated."

This last flare of the torch of hope ignited this press despatch to the New York Herald:—"Chicago, May 12, 1893.—Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium is on its legs again, and it is expected the enterprise will be ready to open by August 1, if the weather will permit.—Some time ago, \$400,000 worth of bonds were issued, but they were not taken. They were made preferred; then the stockholders themselves decided to take them. Manager Wheeler took \$50,000; George M. Pullman, \$150,000; Lyman J. Gage and others—the rest.—About \$400,000 have been spent so far, and it will take that much more to make the Spectatorium ready for opening." *

This momentary renewal of high hopes, lasting hardly a fortnight, is strangely responsible for the acquisition of a few "ancestral" acres of tranquil landscape, an open field, opposite our little cottage at Shirley. Across that field—green or golden with grass or rye, barley or Indian corn, of the seasons—during nearly forty years, Steele MacKaye's children, have gazed, at times, toward mornings behind the distant white spires of Groton. And there, in that field, it is still hopefully planned that the permanent memorial of Steele MacKaye, with fireproof safety for the archives of this biography, may yet stand in his remembrance. If so, that consummation will have sprung from this telegram, wired to me in the east from my father, in Chicago, on May 15th, '93: †

† Addressed to me at 861 Main St., Cambridge, where I was then cramming

for my entrance examinations to Harvard.

^{*}This total equals just the amount (\$800,000) subscribed in the summer of 1892, \$500,000 of which was paid in. Thus the personal management of Steele MacKaye—"officially vindicated," on May 14, '93—is seen to have kept within the original financial estimate planned from the start.

"Purchase field at price * immediately. Affairs justify investment. Deep love.—S. M."

So from his buoyant spirit has sprung a green, lasting memorial of quiet nature.—Very briefly at the time, however, lasted the green oasis of happiness which burgeoned it. For a few days of release. he joined my mother in New York, during which some "petty contractors" in Chicago set on foot in his absence a fatal mischief, which destroyed all his brave hopes and calculations. Returning in haste to Chicago, he found his newly-reared plans in process of crumbling.—That situation, during May of '93, is thus described by my father himself, in his own words.+

200 NEW \$100-BONDS SOLD; "WITHIN 30 DAYS-SUCCESS"; BUT 3 PETTY CONTRACTORS BRING LIENS; -- "TEMPORARY" RECEIVERSHIP

"In spite of all the hard blows which malicious rumours and hard times were giving the scheme, I succeeded in selling nearly 200 bonds. In another thirty days, I might have disposed of all of them, and have carried the work on with triumph to every one. But two or three petty contractors determined to embarrass the company by liens. I discovered this just in time to protect the rights of all creditors alike, by throwing the affairs of the Company into the hands of a receiver. This did not necessarily kill the project. It but delayed it, until claims could be compromised and the whole project be reorganised."

This not-too-Utopian confidence is expressed also by the practical legal mind of Powell Crosley, a Cincinnati stockholder of the enterprise, in an interview with him, at the time, in the Cincinnati Times-Star (May 31, '93 ‡), from which the following are some excerpts, published under the caption:

"MACKAYE'S SPECTATORIUM. The Story of a Receiver for the \$2,000,000 Scheme, Which Was to Startle and Delight the World's Fair Visitor-Columbus Caravels Life Size-Floating Continents-Real Cyclones—Awful Realisms—Grand Chorus—Seidl Orchestra— Pullman and Other Capitalists Ready to put in More Money.

"Mr. Powell Crosley returned home Tuesday from Chicago, where he had been to attend a meeting concerning a receiver for Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium. Mr. Crosley, who is a stockholder, said:—'This great

* The price was \$500, of which \$100 was then sent by my father, to pay to Napoleon Lafayette Warren, a farmer of Shirley, who held the mortgage of \$400, till it was paid up. The field and cottage are now owned by the Mac-Kaye Family Association, children and descendants of James Steele and Mary Medbery MacKaye.

† In a letter to the editor of the Chicago Inter-Ocean, in July, '93, quoted

further on page ii, 412.

‡ A week later, at Cambridge, my diary records (June 7, '93):—"Edwin Booth, the famous actor, died in New York this morning. He is to be buried at Mt. Auburn cemetery."

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conception of Steele MacKaye's was within about one month of completion, but funds became short because of the tightness of money; some of the smaller shareholders became alarmed and precipitated the action leading to the appointment of a receiver. . . . The company was capitalised at \$2,000,000, and \$800,000 in first mortgage bonds. \$500,000 of bonds were sold last summer; then the sale was stopped, because it was considered that, as the great scheme neared completion, they would sell more readily. But this panic in the money market upset all our calculations: \$200,000 * of the \$300,000 bonds had been sold at the time a receiver was appointed. . . . It was thought best to appoint one, temporarily at least, to prove property, and get matters straightened out. But I still regard prospects as good, and I think yet that it will be a great money-making scheme. Those who have the most money in it seem to have the most faith in it, and are willing to put in more money. Mr. George Pullman, Lyman Gage, Mr. Rean, Mr. Hutchinson (son of 'old Hutch'), Cudahy, Ritter, Gillette,-in fact, about a hundred of Chicago's capitalists are backing it, and are ready to go ahead. It will only take about a month to finish it. Once completed, I am satisfied that its wonderful realisms would so impress every one that its fame would spread like magic. Steele MacKaye is certainly a genius, and the thing he has conceived here will not end with the World's Fair '"

CAPITALIST "SHEEP AND GOATS"; LYMAN GAGE'S "HIGH TRIBUTE" TO MACKAYE

Upon that issue, however, the hundred capitalist shareholders soon afterward appear to have split. The issue was really crucial to their declared published intentions, which had always, till then, supported Steele MacKaye's high purpose of founding for Chicago a permanent institution of the theatre's art.—This crisis now sorted the sheep from the goats, but—though (as M. P. Handy has stated †) the chief capitalists supported MacKaye to the last ditch, there was sufficient secession of the "goats" to cause a chaos of delay which resulted in ruin for all; so that the Spectatorium became, during the summer of the World's Fair and the autumn following, what my father himself described it: ‡ "that immense structure, which was for so long such a melancholy monument to the timidity of capital and the shattered hopes of many earnest minds."

Among those "earnest minds" was Lyman J. Gage, § from whom it is significant to record a gracious message, sent by him in his old

† On page ii, 318.

‡ In his speech at the opening of the Scenitorium, Feb. 4, 1894, quoted on

pages ii, 311, 340, 332, 346-348.

^{*} Cf. Steele MacKaye's statement on page ii, 403.

[§] Lyman Judson Gage, President Board of Director Chicago Exposition (1892'93), President First National Bank, Chicago (1891), Secretary of U. S. Treasury, in the Cabinets of Presidents McKinley and Roosevelt, etc.

age, thirty-two years later (June 6, 1925, from San Diego, California), in this letter to me from his wife:

"My dear Mr. MacKaye:—Mr. Gage wishes me to say that he has been very ill, and will probably not be able to attend to his correspondence for some time. . . . He says he regrets this, as it would be a privilege for him to pay a high tribute to that remarkable man, Steele MacKaye;—that he has never ceased to wonder at the magnificent conception which Mr. MacKaye endeavoured to present in picturesque form, in 1893; and he has never ceased to regret the combination of circumstances, which could not be controlled, even by the genius and devotion of Mr. MacKaye, that prevented bringing into actuality the dramatic story of Columbus. . . . Mr. Gage said to me he considered it an honour and a privilege to know Mr. Steele MacKaye.—Sincerely,—Gloria Gage (Mrs. Lyman J. Gage)."

"SOME NEW METHOD WILL BE FOUND AND WE WILL YET REACH PEACE

In the midst of this "combination of circumstances which could not be controlled," my father wrote (May 27th, '93) to my mother:*—

"Dear Blessing—The mortgage † is despatched to Shirley. Only one word for your suspense. Progress is very slow, yet seems nearing the end longed for. I am too fagged out to write. Whatever comes, with the love we have for each other—and so many glorious ones to love—we cannot fail of happiness even in the midst of material misery. But no misery will last long before the determination of my love. Some new method will be found and we shall yet reach peace. If all goes well, or ends either way, I shall be with you Friday next; but if the battle be still in progress, I shall not be able to escape.—My heart will be with you all, anyway. Deepest love to dear Helen and Hal, and the deepest depth of the divinest love of my life to you—from S. M."

"BATTLE IN PROGRESS: MACHINERY ALL MADE; SHOW IN FAIR ORDER; BUILDING UNCOMPLETED"

The battle, however, continued "still in progress."

"It is too bad," wrote the Chicago Times, on June 4th, '93, "that a tight money market has found a victim in Steele MacKaye. Looking miserably fagged and careworn, he was seen last Sunday night—still sanguine he could pull through. The machinery is all made, he said, and the details of the great Spectatorium show in fair order, if only the building could be completed. But the cards are against him. . . . When the whole country is suffering from severe monetary stringency, and in

* At Pittsburgh, where—on her way with her daughter, Hazel, to Chicago, to join my father—she stopped, to visit her son, Harold, and his wife for their first wedding anniversary—the "Friday" (June 2nd) mentioned in this letter of S. M.

ti.e. the mortgage of \$400 for the Shirley field. Cf. page ii, 403.

Chicago, for the time, millions are locked up in hotels and special provisions for the World's Fair, it was hardly to be expected that funds to finish the Spectatorium could be provided.—If the men who have grown rich upon MacKaye's ideas were to come forward now and put him on his feet, it would be but simple justice. The story of Mackage's contributions to other men's pockets would make interesting reading. He built the Madison Square Theatre, and the Mallorys have taken the receipts. He built the Lyceum Theatre, for other men to get rich upon. The creations of this genius' brain have never given their father more than a precarious living. To make matters worse, nature has made MacKaye generous to a fault. . . . It speaks volumes for the man that, iu all this Spectatorium business, nobody who knows him, and understands the causes of the wreck, has a harsh word to say of MacKave."

COLLAPSE: "ALMOST DYING CONDITION": REST AT LAKE GENEVA

Describing further the situation at this time, the Pittsburgh Dispatch afterward wrote (Feb. 28, '94):- "Rumours of financial trouble for the Spectatorium had begun to float about. Contractors claimed they were not getting their money, and workmen refused to labour on promises. A receivership followed. That was on June first, '93, when almost a million had been expended, and the building was little more than a skeleton. . . . Work on the building came to a sudden stop. Men who held contracts for \$396,275, on which only \$59,000 had been paid, began to hustle round for their money. The great chorus of 334 people found itself out of employment, with its contracts notated. The Anton Seidl orchestra, which had furnished the music for the rehearsals, was left with a heavy balance unpaid. . . . The great enterprise collapsed and MacKaye was involved in the ruin. He was taken away by friends to Lake Geneva in an almost dying condition; but he rallied and partly recovered."

From Chicago, my father wrote to my mother, on June 13th:

"Dear Heart-After the collapse, I felt the fatigue of my long fight, and Mr. Curtis Dunham, * a good friend, carried me off to Lake Geneva, a divine place for rest. Now I have a proposition to make. Suppose you and Hazel come on here at once and we go to Lake Geneva for a couple of weeks. It will cost something, but I think we must face that, in order that we may consult for the future. . . . Telegraph me if you will be here Friday, and at what hour.—Deepest love.—S. M."

In early June, during his brief stay at that "divine place for rest," Lake Geneva, though incurably stricken in health, + he had been rallying the routed cohorts of his dreams, by the capacity of

^{*}Cf. statements by Curtis Dunham on pages 279, 455, footnotes.
†"Each day since the failure," wrote the Chicago Herald (Feb. 26, '84),
"had been a milepost on the journey to the grave. He fled to Geneva Lake
in the summer, but inch by inch he lost his vitality. When he came back to
the city, his admirers were shocked by his looks." Cf. Appendix.

an imagination undefeatable, to a new onslaught of creative vindication. There at the lovely lake resort, during his brief releases from the city's turmoil, joined now by his wife and his daughter, Hazel—namesake of an earlier triumph out of apparent defeat—he conferred concerning this new plan (developed in the next chapter of our story), and "consulted for the future" with the ever consultable comrade of his life-career since early manhood; and from there,—increased in hope by her stintless sympathy, and in health elusively snatched from those tranquil lake-waters of June—he returned to another long battle at Chicago. From there he wrote back, on June 26th to my mother (at "Kayes Park, Lake Geneva"):

"STRONGER—TO SUCCEED THIS TIME—RENEW OUR WORK WITH GLAD HEARTS ONCE MORE"

"Dear Heart—I am working very hard. It looks as though I were to succeed this time,—but I must not leave here an hour, until I have consummated the arrangements I am now trying to drive through. . . . If I succeed, I shall send for Percy to join us at once, and we will renew our work with glad hearts once more. . . . I am so glad Hazel is happy. Shall wire when I can leave to rejoin you at Lake Geneva. It may be any moment—may be not for some days. I am growing stronger again. Benedictions to you both!—S. M."

"The arrangements," however, were not then to be consummated in time for him to send for me, there to "renew our work with glad hearts once more." Instead, the new plans moved very slowly, and my mother and sister returned (July 6th) to the needfully-inexpensive simplicities of our cottage home at Shirley.

Meantime, the doom was sealed of his long-visioned "institution, dedicated to the divine duty" of the theatre's communal ideal. None the less, though the full fruition was not to be, during those summer days of transitional destiny, imminent ruin had been averted to ultimate victory, as the sequel will reveal.

ANCESTRAL RHYTHMS: "GREAT DIFFICULTIES OVERCOME WITH ANSWERABLE COURAGES"

There—while phases of that "New World Symphony," which he had dreamed should interpret the New World Finder theme of his Spectatorio, were being recast by the genius of their composer * in other forms than those of a new theatre art—even then, through the pioneering will of Steele MacKaye there were pulsing, in deep ancestral rhythms of the past, themes of another New World Sym-

^{*} Dvořák.

phony wrought of that hardy New England whence he himself had

sprung.

In the first chapter of this epic story, I have cited those four excerpts from the Plymouth Chronicle of Governor William Bradford, from which the genius of Edgar Stillman-Kelley has evolved contrasted themes of his noblest work. Those themes in music strangely express my father's life in action and imagination. And now, at this moment of his greatest crisis—penetrating the hot, mad mêlée of Chicago and the dreamy lake waters of Geneva—two of those themes peculiarly recur, rhythmic to these motivating words of that first great American pioneer, his ancestor, Bradford:

I:—"All great and honourable actions are accompanied by great difficulties and must be enterprised and overcome with answerable courages. . . .

II:- "Warm and fair weather: the birds sang in the woods most

pleasantly."

"Great and honourable" had been the actions of Steele MacKaye; yet, in one fell moment, their token in visible structure of beauty was raped from his outward sight: not, however, from his inward vision—where "birds sang in the woods most pleasantly." There, once more, his "answerable courages" took up the instant battle of building again. For within himself was the victory—not without. This he knew; and this—even in the centre of an outwardly "insane energy"—begot that temperance and poise of loving philosophy expressed in so many of his letters here recorded.

"FAITH, AND IMPERIAL SELF-CONFIDENCE; IF I FAIL, I SHALL SAY—
"WHAT NEXT?"

In one of these especially—written to my mother, at the outset of his Chicago struggle, a year and a half earlier,*—his own words sum up in resolution the beginning-"end-all" of this life chapter, on the eve of his last. These were his words:

"The enterprise is so immense that I may go down in the fight.... But remember, with my reverent love: Worry never yet inspired or strengthened any one. Faith, and the imperial self-confidence which that begets, is the only quality to be trusted in such a struggle as mine. If I fail, I shall say—'What next?'"

^{*} Cf. page ii, 318.

CHAPTER XXXI

INVINCIBLE

Chicago

July, '93—Dec., '93

COLUMBUS' LIFE-THEME: "PATIENCE-THE PASSION OF GREAT SOULS"

THE THEME OF HIS LAST CREATIVE WORK—THE LONG BATTLE OF Columbus for his visionary faith in a new world and its vindicating triumph in proven truth—was deeply kindred to the nature and destiny of Steele MacKaye, to whom, as executive dreamer, its analogues in his own imaginative life were deeply sustaining throughout the relentless hardships of his last year of life.

"Steele MacKaye," wrote the editor of the New York News (March 3, '94), "was as daring in art as any of the great explorers. When Columbus began his voyage to this then unknown shore, he was not more filled with confidence and conviction than was MacKaye when he set on foot his great Spectatorium. He was sure that he was about to open to the new world new fields of scenic art that would mark an epoch of the theatre."

On the title page of his Spectatorio, The World Finder, as prepared by him, in March of '93, for publication in the first issue of The MacKaye Spectatorium Magazine are significantly quoted these lines of Lowell:

"Endurance is the crowning quality,
And patience all the passion of great souls."

Throughout his career my father had endured with patient fortitude and unrancoured goodwill a thousand gibes and calumnies, which—since he himself preferred to let them pass to their due oblivion—have here, in deference to his spirit, been as duly ignored by this memoir. In first devising his drama of Columbus' life, however, he had hardly dreamed how poignantly some of its symbolic actions would come to apply to this passage in his own life, when the noble theme he had hoped to blazon in the souls of his countrymen was now, by some of them, sardonically turned against him.

SCENARIO OF THE WORLD-FINDER: GENIUS AND MOB IGNORANCE; VISION OF NEW WORLD

In his Introduction to The World Finder, he wrote:

"The aim of this work is to tell the story of Columbus in a manner that will illustrate, forcibly, the steadfastness of purpose, the patient

endurance, the stern determination, the benevolent nature, the religious faith, and the dauntless courage of the man, to whom civilisation is indebted for a new world, . . . while doing this, to suggest the Providential meaning of his advent and achievements."

My father's dramatic development of this theme for Spectatorio production had all the unsophisticated directness, symbolic import and fervent naïveté of a Passion Play. Set down in simple phrasings, it was intended primarily to forecast, for "unliterary" readers, the pantomimic, musical and visual symbols of its actual production. There is no space to quote from it here at length, but a few brief passages are included, for the biographical analogues which they suggest, as well as for the imbuing spirit of their author. The scenario begins:

"Convent of La Rabida on brow of hill—Port of Palos in distance. Halfway down the hill—three crosses: the Saviour between two thieves.

. . . Music, sinister and suspensive, ushers a mob of Peasants and ribald Cavaliers. On foot and on horseback they descend the steep hill

. . . pausing, as one describes a certain madman, named Columbus.

. . . Changing music expresses weariness, exhaustion. . . . At base of hill, left, appears the figure of a man, full of dignity and grandeur, leading a little child by the hand . . . worn, travel-stained, almost prostrated by fatigue. The man is Columbus; the child—his son (Fernando), who afterward became his father's faithful follower, champion and biographer."

Strangely this last sentence, written by my father in 1893, has now first come under my eye years afterward (in September, 1926)—a veiled intimation out of the past, sacredly long-hidden. The symbolic analogue in my father's life, the son who, most of all, was his "faithful follower"—my brother Will—having died in youth, I am constrained to realise that it has been my lifelong privilege to become, in a sense, the Fernando of his visioning career—in case this biography (which has grown in my thoughts during more than thirty years) shall at last succeed in revealing its great subject.—The scenario continues.

"The child symbolises the hope and faith of the father's soul—the precious project which he bore over all obstacles to success. The mob of Peasants and Cavaliers represents the visionless forces of the time, in which he lived: the ignorance and arrogance which jeered at the dreamer as a madman, a fool, or a fraud. The hill of Rabida is very rugged and symbolises the height of difficulties which the discoverer

endeavoured to surmount with heroic fortitude, for over eighteen vears." *

The scenario of The World-Finder ends with a vision—depending for the mystical beauty of its revelation, upon the mastery of light, colour and composition in that theatre art of which Steele MacKaye, as producing artist, was peculiarly master. The scene is the attic room + of an Inn at Seville. Prostrate-in the dark of his despair-Columbus lies at the foot of a wooden Calvary.

"Presently (concludes the scenario) his soul is exalted by an inspiring vision.—This vision of the dying man grows in light out of the very air. In distant spaces, amid an infinite number of stars, appears a vast globe, disclosing the mysterious outlines of an unknown world. An immense host of angels appear in the upper spaces of radiance. In the lower foreground writhe a shadowy multitude—the unfortunate of Earth, who suffer and are heavy laden. . . . Between these contrasted groups, appears the Christ-behind him, the armies of light; at his feet, the sombre shades of ignorance and oppression. Gazing toward the prostrate figure of Columbus, tenderly—while He points with one hand at the wretched in darkness, with the other-He reveals the New World. ‡ . . . As this vision fully dawns, the far angelic voices are heard, singing their spirit song to the dreamer—prophesying the illuminations, elevations and liberations of mankind which are to be wrought out in the mysterious regions of the west; announcing to the long-tried navigator his discovery of a world destined ultimately to become the home of a redeemed humanity."

In those "mysterious regions of the west" four hundred years later, at Chicago, "the home of a redeemed humanity" (ultimately "to be?") was still the symbolic scene of a struggle, wherein this later dreamer who envisioned Columbus' dreams sought to save his hope from being destroyed by "visionless forces of the time in which he lived."

Before the very eyes of the author of The World Finder, the theatre of his own and Columbus' dreams, with all its potential splendours, was now about to be razed to the ground—for the ephemeral whim of a journalistic "public panic": a trumped-up fear lest fire, which had accidentally destroyed a cold-storage plant of

^{*} By coincidence, in the long struggle of Steele MacKaye's career, it was just eighteen years, at the time he wrote these words, since his first theatre production (in 1875), after his return to America from labours abroad.

† Cf. on page ii, 457, the attic room of the dying Chatterton—at the last "benefit" of Steele MacKaye.

‡ Here the New World Symphony of Dvořák was to intensify this imagined moment. See picture by Norman Bel Geddes in this chapter.

the Exposition, might start up in the unfinished Spectatorium building and so menace the Fair:

"HUE AND CRY-MISCHIEVOUS CLAMOUR"-"GRANDEST AUDITORIUM OF WESTERN WORLD SOLD FOR OLD JUNK"

"A hue and cry is raised now," wrote Steele MacKaye (in an open letter to the Editor of the Inter-Ocean *), "because of the disaster at the cold storage building at the Fair. To gratify this sudden and unreasonable timidity, a noble institution must be abolished. . . . The Chicago Spectatorium, enthusiastically endorsed by such artists as Dvorák and Seidl and by the very best men of all professions in this city, was intended to be a permanent institution; one that would outlast the exposition and remain as a suggestion of its unparallelled magnitude and grandeur. Circumstances have forced us to abandon this enterprise as a feature of the Fair, but that is no reason why we should, like pettish boys, fling away its possibly glorious future and acknowledge ourselves defeated, when we have such a substantial right and duty to succeed. . . . Now while The work of reorganisation is proceeding with every hope of success, it is proposed to destroy in a day what it has taken so long to create. The pretense is advanced that the building is a menace to the property about it. This is not true. There are twelve stairways to the top of the building. . . . A fire started there could be more readily mastered than in any other building in the world. Its destruction by fire would be a disgrace to the fire department. Chief Sweenie knows this, and declares he fears no danger from that direction.—Again, there is no fire in the building-nor ever would have been, had it been completed. Moreover, it is carefully watched, day and night.

"With no possible excuse for the protests against it, a structure involving a cost of over \$500,000 must be razed to the ground. A proposition so preposterous was never before made, and should be instantly defeated by public indignation and contempt.—I have remained here in the field, determined to carry on the fight necessary to give this city an art institution of an exalted order. If the project must fail, I shall hope so to do my duty as to be absolved from any responsibility for that failure, and I believe that Chicago will not permit the taint of such a fiasco to soil her own good name.—Therefore, with a most sincere love for a city, many of whose best citizens have so loyally stood by my work, I protest against this vandalism as an outrage upon the reputa-

tion and welfare of Chicago itself .- Steele Mackaye."

Printed in conjunction with this open letter, was this endorsement by the Inter-Ocean's dramatic critic, Elwyn A. Barron, whose voice was the only one in Chicago raised in public protest at that all-critical moment:

[&]quot;There is every reason to sympathise with Mr. MacKaye's position.
. . . So many foolish persons prattle about 'the failure of the Specta-

^{*} Quoted also on page ii, 403.

torium' that it is no wonder the general community, ignorant of the real facts, is of the opinion it has failed. The simple truth is that the artistic and educational project of Mr. MacKaye has not yet come to trial, and therefore cannot have failed. If the scheme was of a character to induce shrewd business men to invest \$500,000 a year ago, it surely is still worthy of serious consideration, inasmuch as the conditions of that scheme are precisely as they were then; except that the scheme is nearer a practical demonstration by the difference of a building more than two-thirds completed.—For this Spectatorium was not to be a summer affair. It was not projected as a competitor of the Ferris wheel. It was to be an institution, for the delight, edification and education of thousands, this year, next year, every year for indefinite time.—It is, then, the very extravagance of absurdity to assume that Mr. MacKaye's invention is a failure, merely because work has stopped on the building in which he was to exhibit his science.

"That Mr. MacKaye has a grand artistic scheme there is no doubt; that it is practicable of operation his working models have demonstrated. It certainly is a great injustice to deny an artist the opportunity to reap the fruits of a life study, when no one will suffer, and a whole community will benefit by the consummation of his project. . . . True, the Spectatorium is an 'eye-sore,' as one of the papers has declared; but it is an 'eye-sore' because it is unfinished. Instead of clamouring to have it torn down, let us consider the feasibility of completing it.—If \$800,000 has been expended and \$300,000 more will finish the job, the common sense would be to put the \$300,000 in as speedily as possible. . . . It is not Chicago's way to back out after she is once committed to an enterprise, and local pride should carry that building to a finish-to the purpose for which it was designed. At least the city should be thoroughly advised of what it does, and not be led into hasty and foolish action by a clamour that is perhaps more mischievous than intelligent .-ELWYN A. BARRON."

But what city is *ever* "thoroughly advised of what it does?" Or when was the unintelligent ever unmischievous?

"Probably never in the history of the World," wrote the Pittsburgh Dispatch (Feb. 28, '94), "was so vast an amount of money expended on a structure which brought so little on a forced sale. Up to the day when work was abandoned upon the Spectatorium building, \$850,000 had been sunk in the enterprise. It was projected as the largest and grandest auditorium that the Western world had ever seen. It was sold for old junk for the sum of \$2,250. . . On July 18, the Building Commissioner of Chicago ordered it to be removed. No action was then taken on this order, but on September 21, the Chicago Title and Trust Company, receiver for the Company, after submitting to the court that the liabilities were \$600,000, with only \$54,000 as assets in unpaid subscriptions, asked leave to sell the building and dispose of the option on

the real estate. This was granted, and the building was knocked down to a house-wrecking company for \$2,250 at auction." *

Hardly more than three months earlier, Steele MacKaye had written: †

"Realising the colossal character of the scheme. . . . I did not care to submit, for the derision of the mass of doubters who predominate in this world, a project which seemed to me to be potential of incalculable good to mankind. . . . It is not pleasant to confide to others conceptions which seem to yourself sublime, and to have your confidence requited only with smiles that imply you are a fool, or with sneers that suggest you are a fraud. . . . As I look back now upon those days of terrible uncertainty and suspense, when the many thus turned from my enterprise with a smile of derision or sneer of contempt, I realise fully the splendid public spirit which inspired a small group of Chicago capitalists with the courage to undertake my project."

DEMONIAC DRAMA

Where now were the capitalists and the courage?

Once more the smiles of derision and sneers of contempt were in the ascendant; and now the artist-inventor had to look—not back, but forward "upon days of terrible uncertainty and suspense"; for panic, which had paralysed the nation in March and April, continued in July at Chicago its contagion of fear.

Panic, "by a clamour more mischievous than intelligent" led to "hasty and foolish action" by municipal authorities. Panic of the press caused a petty politician to order "removed" a building, constructed with such design of age-long permanent service that its walls, twenty-three feet thick, and its four hundred tons of steel beams, required machinery specially devised to compass their demolition. Panic of the mob, hatched by envy and ignorance, consummated over night such an orgy of meaningless waste that an intricate organic structure, achieved by years of imagination and by almost a million dollars already expended on the labour of expert engineers and an army of workmen, was knocked down by the auctioneer's hammer and hurled into a wrecker's dump-heap.

Mass-fear against individual faith, and the gleeful triumph of the

† In his Preface to The World Finder, prepared by him for publication,

but never published.

^{*}This same article continues: "The work of removing the immense structure was commenced a short time since. It will take months to clear it away, for it requires as fine engineering skill to pull down the Spectatorium as it did to erect it. There are 400 tons of steel beams in the building. Special machinery is required, too, to get the big girders down from their position, and the work is of a very dangerous character.—Such is the melancholy tale of Steele MacKaye's monster Spectatorium venture."

mob, overwhelming in a moment the patient labours of a lifetime: such in 1893, at Chicago, was one more striking repetition of a demoniac drama, endlessly recurrent in its ever-popular acclaim, as laid in the last cell of Columbus, or on the hill of Gethsemane—re-enacted by blindfold performers who "know what they do." Yet only so, apparently, does this "quintessence of dust" achieve self-knowledge; while darkly into the charnels of such impassioned waste the symphonies and the sagas of Man strike deepest roots for the nutriment and bloom of his fantastic sublimity!

Upon the last curtain fall of his career (in Feb., '94), his commentators wrote:

"MacKaye was unquenchable. His success in getting together nearly \$1,000,000 for a mere vision, a pantomime of colour for the eye, a dream in which everything should be real, will remain one of the wonders of theatrical history." . . . "To Steele MacKaye 'impossibility' was an unknown word.—A student of æstheticism, his most ardent hopes were built upon the theatre of the future, in which all the arts should be associated with the highest ideals of manhood. In splendour of ideas, and their concise expression, few men have so completely mastered the principles that underlie all art." . . . "Few men have been so notable as Steele MacKaye. Having begun so often at the bottom himself, he was the natural friend of all seeking to make a start themselves." . . . "His tongue pleaded with the persuasion of Orpheus' lyre." . . . "He was a start that got lost in space."

"Steele MacKaye was a genius, and with genius madness is allied. Great in any department of life, he could do all but keep the property his genius produced. His conversation, brilliant in ideas, dazzling in audacity, was almost universally well-informed; with mechanical tools he was as expert as with poetic words. Would that only his Scotch ancestors had added to his genius—prudence! . . . It was enough for Steele MacKaye that an undertaking was unconventional. He would love it for the precedents it ignored. His genius was revolutionary. He wrote the first successful play without a villain; he built the only double stage; he formulated a new rational of æsthetics and invented its rhythmic forms of embodiment; he devised the scenitorio—a form of art which set at naught many cardinal theatrical canons and doctrines, and will probably remain solitary in the annals of the theatre, of which he will remain one of the most remarkable figures—an absolutely unique American."

"GENIUS UNSPARED AND UNSTINTED":—"HAS THE MODERN WORLD COME TO THIS?"

Such are brief excerpts from many scores of lengthy tributes which sprang to the lips and pens of his contemporaries when, a

few months later, death had ended the labours of Steele MacKaye. But now—in midsummer of '93—very few such were articulate in the open; and though the mob spirit, that destroyed his greatest dream, found few voices of journalism to express it, yet obscurely and rabidly it vented its destructive passion.—Any articulate expressions of that ephemeral clamour are not worthy of survival; but the existence of it is hinted between the lines of this warmhearted comment in a Chicago newspaper at the time:

"Notwithstanding the fiasco of the Spectatorium, no one who knows Steele MacKave has lost any admiration of, or respect for, that singular genius. . . . An enthusiast, wrestling ever with strange ideas, MacKaye may be reckless, improvident, but there isn't a dishonest hair in his head .-- A great-hearted, great-headed fellow, he is incomprehensible to most people, because he is in every way so much bigger than most men. Only he lacks some sort of balance. He isn't selfish enough; isn't conservative enough; doesn't look into the immediate present enough.-We haven't a doubt that Steele MacKaye has given something to the future that will revolutionise stage mechanics and make half a dozen fortunes for others-in spite of the fellows who now smile and shake their wise little heads when his name is spoken. . . . This very Spectatorium would have waked their immeasurable wonderment, had it been carried to completion; it yet may do so. Meantime MacKave is disheartened, crestfallen, because despite of him the great plan of his life is in ruins and he has the blame of it. Now is a good time to clap him on the shoulder, in old friendly fashion; for, if this man live long enough, it will be rather a proud thing some day to hail him friend."

Not in a way "to clap him on the shoulder" was Steele MacKaye to "live long enough"; while some of the "wise little heads," here referred to, soon deemed it incumbent upon them, even in the shadow of his passing, to offer up their superfluous apologies in defense of his life's "failure":—To such, one outspoken commentator wrote: *

"Is this failure? Does such a failure stand in need of defense?—Is not such a defense an indictment of success, as measured by the vulgar standard? The genius that has gone forth, unspared and unstinted, to the ennobling of a great art; the life that has been ready to spend, and be spent, in the service of realising the visioned future; are these to be reckoned up in dollars and cents, even by implication in spurning so mean and unworthy a judgment?—Has the modern world come to this, that genius that does not pay its way must be insulted with excuses and degraded by defences?—Generous was the love inspired by Steele Mac-Kaye; unbounded was the admiration paid to his wonderful powers; but humiliating is that note of apology for seeming failure, in the tributes

^{*}In the Waterbury North American (March 3rd, 1894).

of some of those closest to him, supposed to be most appreciative of what he was."

This comment indeed unbares the very quick of this life-story. In the nature of Steele MacKaye there was no compromise which sought to compound the specious elements of "success" * and "failure." In his life-blood the crimson and white corpuscles of God and Mammon shone clearly divided in battle-feud.

"HORRIBLE TURMOIL OF STRUGGLE"; "A FEW LAST SWEET DAYS?"—NEW PROJECT

So, at this hour of his "failure," in the summer of '93, "genius, unspared and unstinted," struggled on, oblivious, with fresh and conquering hope, in which these letters—from my father, at Chicago, to my mother and to me, at Shirley, in July, reflect his battle for a new project, in vindication of the old:

(July 15): "Dear Heart—All is yet in suspense. I hoped before this to be able to send you word of a decision. I am still disappointed. I enclose letters which I ought to have sent before. I am losing my memory. . . . Thank precious Percy for his dear letters. I want to write him a letter, but I am too consumed with anxiety—all my mental powers are paralysed. Tell him not to think me ungrateful for the most blessed letters ever written a father by any son. I trust he will understand some day what I feel. † . . . "

(July 18 ‡): "Dear Heart—Only a line, in the hope of easing your anxiety. I have raised four-fifths of the money necessary to carry through the new project, by which I hope to earn our bread. Within a week or ten days, I hope to raise the remainder. . . . These are terrible times, and I wonder that I have been able to raise a dollar, considering the impecunious condition of even the richest men. I am very tired with this effort, but I think my forces will revive when the opportunity this money will afford is secured.—My heart is with you all. I long for a taste of the sunshine of Shirley. In haste and deepest love. S. M."

(July 18): "My dear, precious Percy—I have neglected you abominably. Your letters deserve replies that my heart, but not my wretched tired head, can send you. . . . I hate to shadow your dear life with any words about mine: I think of you in peaceful Shirley—with love and the sunlight of the wide free fields about you—and I feel almost like an intruder upon serene, supremely holy ground, to send even a line

^{*} For his ideal of the kind of success worth attaining, cf. his letter to his son, Benton, on page ii, 436.

[†] He has tried—inadequately—to express his sense of it in this memoir.

‡ This was the very day on which the Chicago Building Commissioner ordered the Spectatorium building to be removed!

from the hot, horrible turmoil of my struggle—into the divine peace of your home. . . . You do not long for me any more than I do for you; and if you do as much, I pity you. But, my boy,—greatly as I crave the sight and sound and touch of you—I could never be happy with you, if neglecting the work by which I hope to free your young life from the

galling fetters that I have always borne.

"While I struggle here alone, I am happier than I would be in the midst of all the dearest treasures of my life—feeling the days of desperate need creeping nearer, and I away from the field whose constant tilling can alone keep haggard want from the little home.—Some day, perhaps, before I slip away, I may be granted a few last, sweet days of peace among my dear ones,* healed and strengthened for the wast adventure of another world, by the divine influence of love, unbalked by the sordid battle for daily bread.—I am still hoping to do something here that will vindicate me as an artist, and provide freedom from care for a little of the future. No matter how hard or trying the struggle, no hour passes without loving thoughts of you—and my other treasures. God bless you all for your father.—S. M."

"TO VINDICATE HIS ART," MACKAYE, ILL, RAISES \$50,000 TO CREATE THE SCENITORIUM

That "something here that will vindicate me as an artist" was nothing less than his tenacious dream, in the form of a more modest fulfilment than before projected. In brief, his "what next?" was his Scenitorium, a quintessence of his Spectatorium, shorn now of all specious superfluities desired by speculative investors, eager for subrentals of restaurants, roof garden, conning tower, special privileges, etc., none of which had been desired by himself † save for the need of "capturing capitalists."—Greatly reduced in scale, to a theatre seating about eight hundred persons, with a proscenium opening of 60 by 20 feet (instead of 150 by 70), it was now to be focused wholly upon the visual and choral features, with their imaginative meanings.

His Spectatorium would have cost about a million and a quarter dollars his Scenitorium was to cost about \$50,000 \(\dagger—a considerable "come down" in capitalisation. Yet well might he write to my mother: "I wonder that I have been able to raise a dollar, considering the impecunious condition of even the richest men.". Con-

[·] He was never granted it.

[†] Cf. statement of F. R. Green on page ii, 332.

[‡] On Feb. 2, '94, the Chicago Evening Journal wrote: "The first performance of Steele MacKaye's Scenitorio, *The World Finder*, will be given this evening at the MacKaye Scenitorium, 130 Michigan Ave., formerly the home of the Chicago Fire Cyclorama, which has been remodelled at a cost of nearly \$50,000, to suit the purposes of the great author and inventor."—(The opening was postponed to Monday, Feb. 5.)

sidering also, he might have added, the amazing nature of his appeal: in the face of the colossal wreck of his own enterprise—which more courage of capitalists might have saved—instantaneously to ask the same capitalists for \$50,000 more, in order to prove their judgment wrong and his own—right.

When, in the history of art-finance has such a feat been accomplished?—Yet he accomplished it.—Out of the ruin of his dreams he raised again not only their vindication, but the money to demonstrate it. For the needful money to construct the Scenitorium the funds were mainly supplied by former investors, chiefly by Pullman and Gage, to whom was added Spaulding, the athletic goods capitalist.

VACHEL LINDSAY ON "TREMENDOUS AND COURAGEOUS LIFE OF STEELE MACKAYE"

The fame of such convincing powers rose also above the ruin, in tributes which even to-day are handed on in tradition, as recently I was touched to receive new proof, expressed to me by an indigenous genius of Chicago's own state—Nicholas Vachel Lindsay, of Abe Lincoln's Springfield, poet of that vast heart of America which pulses alike in ancient prairie-silences and in strident city modernities.—On Nov. 2, 1925, he wrote to me:

"Dear Percy:—I remember so well, at the World's Fair, the gigantic unfinished MacKaye Spectatorium. I remember all the anticipation of that project's completion that was in the air—and, when your father died so soon after, I remember the great tributes to him in the periodicals, though I was such a small boy.—The picture was of a man of most romantic and compelling personal leadership, who could assemble the most powerful and diverse men in the country for his projects—men utterly different from one another and himself, yet surrendering in the gamest spirit to executing projects utterly alien to their habits and their apparent notions. . . . Since that day his projects have worked themselves out, in other hands, in everything from the movie to the civic masque and outdoor memorial Pageant. . . . Surely the tremendous and courageous life of Steele MacKaye should be told with clarity and power, and the American people of all people should applaud and wonder." *

EDGAR LEE MASTERS ON FAIR'S "BRILLIANCY" AND TRAGIC "MIRACLE" OF SPECTATORIUM:—CARL SANDBURG

It is pleasant also to record here some recollections of another distinguished poet permanently significant to America, friend of

^{*} Another portion of this statement by Lindsay has been quoted on page ii, 254.

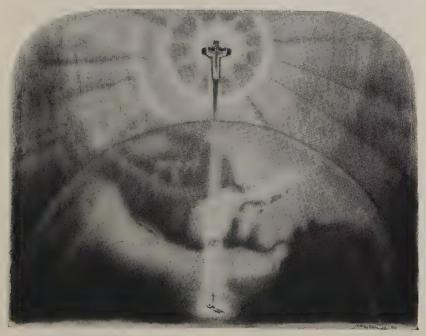
Lindsay and myself, Edgar Lee Masters, of Chicago, who has briefly sketched his impressions of its great gay epoch of festival and the contrasted tragedy of the Spectatorium in these memories, written down for me, at New York, April 4, 1926:

"The summer of 1893 was one of the most beautiful that has ever blessed the world in a time of festival; and in Chicago by the great lake it lengthened itself into long days of clear skies and brilliant sunshine. I was then a newcomer, and marvels were at every hand for me. Life was wholly delight, and sleep was a dispensable indulgence. . . . The city then had climbed to a periodic perfection, beyond which to our imaginations there was no further height; and the great World's Fair was a time of spiritual tiptoeing. Upon the old town, old in its gardens, restaurants and haunts, was overlaid the brilliancy of new resorts for feasters and players, tempting them with the innovations of Paris, Vienna and other continental centres of delight. . . . In that day there were colourful characters, survivors of the early timespoliticians, notables as sportsmen, wits and wags,—who helped to ensure full liberty against the Puritans for the city's Bacchic senses. Nothing was forbidden. . . . At the Fair, what crowds one saw! One day, 700,000 passed the gates of the Midway Plaisance, the Ferris Wheel, Old Cairo, and all the other unexampled sights: the Macmonnies fountain, the galleries of treasures brought from the Louvre, from Berlin, Rome, and every gallery in Europe.—Corbett, the new champion, eyed by the multitude, strode through the crowds. Sandow, the strong man, was there. Strains of Viennese music mingled with the beat of drums and the nasal monotony of Egyptian pipes.

"Yes, and there were wonders for which we still waited, in chief the opening of Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium,—the wonder place, where an artist had poured the abundance of his creative imagination in some miracle of ingenious mechanics, in which electric contrivances magically produced and changed the unfolding spectacle. We could see the unfinished building, and waited for it to be opened to our wonder. . . . But something had happened. There had been bad luck of some sort; we did not know exactly what it was; perhaps a tangle of money. So the building stood unfinished to our view, looming just beyond the Fair grounds.—And so it was to the end: to the night that flames wrapped the Court of Honour, and swept the Midway.—But the wreckers got the Spectatorium, climbing into its ribbed nakedness and ripping away its half completed walls. . . . Then the word went about that Steele MacKaye was dead. The city went back to business which was bad, and the panic returned. All that colour and riot of joy were swept back into the receding days, back with the dreams never realised, like those of the Spectatorium; and we went on, never to feast and play again so

freely, so fully."

Still another outstanding poet of our time, whose art has etched the life of Chicago in lasting images, Carl Sandburg, has written



COLUMBUS' VISION OF THE NEW WORLD

AN IMAGINATIVE RECONSTRUCTION BY NORMAN BEL GEDDES (1927)
From Steele MacKaye's Spectatorio, "The World Finder" (1892)

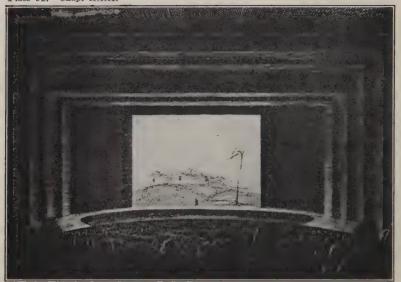
"Prostrate—in the dark of his despair—Columbus lies at the foot of a wooden Calvary.

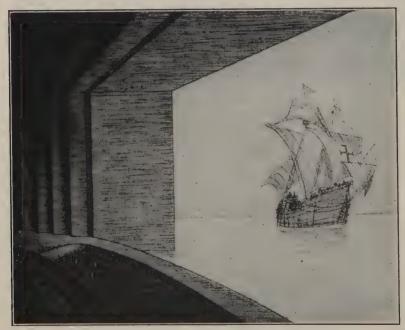
"Presently . . . the vision of the dying man grows in light out of the very air. In distant spaces appears a vast globe, disclosing the mysterious outlines of an unknown world.

of an unknown world....
"Beyond—the armies of light; beneath
—the sombre shades of oppression; ...
between them—appears the Christ."

(From Scenario of "The World Finder", by Steele MacKaye (pages ii, 411, 443).

To accompany and interpret this vision, Anton Duorak composed portions of his "New World Symphony".





THE SPECTATORIUM, INTERIOR, SEATING 12,000

Two Imaginative Reconstructions, by Robert Edmond Jones: I—(Above), View, from last row of the Orchestra, of "La Rabida Scene" of "The World Finder", showing use of MacKaye's "Proscenium Adjuster", partly closed, in regulating size of Stage Picture (patent design, at back of Vol. Two). II—(Below), Side view of the Stage and Proscenium, showing full-sized replica of Columbus' flagship, the "Santa Maria".

me that he recalls Steele MacKave as "a man commanding respect and affection—a very definite cultural force."

A "TRANSPORTING" TELEGRAM: MY BROTHERS AND I, CALLED TO "THE WHITE CITY"

The recollections of Edgar Lee Masters include the grey aftermath of the brilliant Fair. During September, 1893, however, the vivid festival was at its height, and during that time my father was resourcefully compassing the plans of his new project, of which he wrote to me in this letter of Sept. 10th:

"My dear, precious boy-I send you these few lines to let you know that I am still in the land of the living, and that I am steadily progressing toward the accomplishment of the project I have so long had in hand.—Four weeks ago the work of many months was demolished and I was obliged to begin all over again. In spite of countless obstacles, I have obtained subscriptions of \$12,000. When I have raised \$3,000 more, I shall begin work.* I hope then to get an advance payment, and possibly I may be able to carry it to Shirley myself. I also hope to raise enough to bring you and Jack and Ben here, to see the Fair.—I am worried, awfully, about your entrance into college, lest this money may not come in time to give you a few days here, before you must enter. In case it did not, could you not get away from college for a week, soon after entering? . . . My lectures † have been postponed until October, as the financial result promises better then.—I rec'd the Curry tbook and pamphlets.—What a sad and terrible summer this has been-how full of crushing disappointments and consuming suspense! But I am plodding on, determined not to be downed by ill fortune, so long as life lasts. . . . Unutterable love to you all from vour Padre-S. M."

It was his ardent wish to have all his family see the Great Fair. Owing to the pinch of money, three of us boys had not yet seen it, and time was brief, as my brother James (then a college junior) and I were to commence our college year on Sept. 28th at Harvard, where I was about to enter as a freshman.—To attain his heart's desire, within this brief interval my father bent now all his energies, with an auspicious result which has endowed my own life with a profoundly quickening memory of mingled magnificence in civic beauty and pensive human tragedy.—At our little Shirley cottage,

^{*} The total amount required was \$50,000, as mentioned above.

[†] These "lectures," on his new inventions, etc., he never gave, owing to

excess of illness and work.

‡ A book on the *Principles of Expression*, by S. S. Curry, Ph.D., his pupil, head of the Boston School of Expression. In his book, which is based upon my father's work, Prof. Curry pays loyal tribute to his teacher.

on September 20th, arrived this "transporting" telegram to my mother:

"Money for project all raised. Mailed you check one hundred today. Borrow enough to send boys here immediately. Telegraph when they start and depot they arrive.—S. M." *

Such telegrams, of mingled perturbation and jubilation, were the home mixture of Scotch oats and wild thyme on which the colts of Steele MacKaye had been raised from the manger. Called alluringly away from familiar New England pastures toward a "far west" now first to be adventured, my brothers, James and Benton, and I (ætatis 21, 14 and 18) set off, on the evening of September 21st, for Chicago.

"Father met us at the Station (notes my diary). He's not looking at all well, but he's much better. We took a cab to the Hotel Thomas, where we stopped—all four—and had a supper before going to bed."

How well I recall that towards-midnight supper: how, the instant my father entered the restaurant, the waiters came scurrying to his nod of unconscious royalty; how he chose a retired table, where we could make a "homey" circle, wherein with gusto of reunion he ordered varied appetising dishes for us (taking only hot milk for himself); while we, de gustibus, devoured with our mouths—his chosen viands, with our ears—his storied forecasts of to-morrow's treats in store for us at the Fair; and with our eyes—the all-else-excelling delight of our attained desire: his dear presence in our midst once more. During those nights of our stay, our quarters being small, he and I were bedfellows, and talked into the small hours.

On the first morning, to his long-anticipated relish, having passed through the turn-stiles, the miracle of the vast "White City" burst on our astonished gaze under dazzling September skies.

"The beauty of the whole was inexpressibly grand (comments my diary). . . . At night, we watched the fireworks on Lake Michigan, but the electric light and moonlight far surpassed the fireworks."

WONDER OF NEW ELECTRIC NIGHT: COLUMBUS' VISIONARY CARAVELS

Never again can the wonder of electric light have that incomparable freshness as of miracle. That was the first time we had

*"When it came," records my diary of that date, "I was mending the old apple tree. Of course, plans, problems and discussions filled the rest of the day."

ever beheld our familiar earth so illumined—and that first beholding was on a scale of austere loveliness, super-Grecian in form and magnitude, breath-taking—unbelievable! It was a new electric night, substituting for all time to come a new world of illusion for that of the ancient stars in all ages past.

My father's delight in our wonder led him, late on the following night-after days packed with sight-seeing-to gather us again beside the enormous Macmonnies fountain,* still playing its manyhued mists after all the crowds had gone home. There we were alone with him, seated—pale, haggard, but happy,—in the wheelchair, in which we took turns in pushing him during those days, along the magnificent distances of the Fair.

"In the evening, about 10:30 (says my diary), we sat by the great fountain, and watched the marvellous sight stretched out before us, and there was scarce another soul to be seen."

There, in the mingled glow of nature's moon and man's newly fettered lightning, temple on visionary temple rose and melted away toward seeming-infinite horizons. Near us, on waters as visionary, silent yet startlingly eloquent of the ages, one of the ancient caravels of Columbus lay becalmed. +-My father gazed on it there. My eyes followed his. Were we in truth enveloped by imagination? Was not that one of his Spectatorium dreamships-Pinta, Nina, Santa Maria? . . . Were we not met at last in his solemn production, that never had been, never was to be on earth, yet never could be raped away from a timeless moment of creative memory?

They were very quiet now, affoat there in spectral beauty—those choral ships of our mingled imaginings. Yet behind and over them were lurking tempests. For them and their viewless seamen, I also had striven for words in that "Storm Choral," quickened by his voyaging images—there in that shut bedroom, where (a year before) he had turned the key in the lock, and waited. I pressed my father's hand. He pressed mine.

^{*} Of that fountain Augustus Saint-Gaudens wrote: "I consider Macmonnies' composition as a whole—the central motive of the boat, the rowing maidens, the young figure of America on top—the most beautiful conception of a fountain in modern times west of the Caspian mountains. It was the glorification of youth, cheerfulness and the American spirit."

† Cf. On the great lagoon of the World's Fair floated a full-sized replica of Columbus' flagship, presented by Spain—still preserved (in 1920).

Columbus' flagship, presented by Spain,—still preserved (in 1926) on the lake, at Lincoln Park, Chicago.

[‡] Cf. page ii, 358.

JAVANESE THEATRE AND SPECTATORIO COMPARED; HAGENBECK'S WILD LIONS

On that day, my diary also records:

"We saw the Javanese village and theatre, decidedly the most interesting feature of the Midway."

There also we sat together; and, looking back after more than thirty years, I know better, now than then, why he took me there, to spend a revealingly instructive hour.

In the theatre-folk-art of the Javanese, the setting is very simple. The two main elements of drama are severed—speech from action. In front of a wicker screen, mute players project (for the eye)—in pantomime delicately synchronous in rhythm—the meanings (through the ear) of spoken dialogue, chanted by a single poetorator, concealed behind the screen.

To this ancient folk art of the orient the Spectatorio conceived by my father was strangely kindred in those basic respects, wherein the function of the concealed Javanese orator was, to some extent, shared by that of the chorus (visible and invisible) of his Spectatorio. Better, undoubtedly, than any dramatist then living he knew how to value the significances of that art, which the jostling Midway crowds stopped momentarily to stare at there, in the tiny theatre of that transplanted village of so-called "savages": art implications which only to-day are beginning "occidentally" to be guessed at.—Not merely, then, as his "sight-seeing" youngster—but as a potential creator of a theatre beyond his day—I was urged by him not to pass this little antique theatre too quickly, with the throngs moving toward the modernities of Machinery Hall.

Another contrasted memory of that World's Fair visit takes me back to a night-hour spent with my father at the exhibition of Hagenbeck, the wild-animal tamer, whose pent beasts of the jungle we could hear roaring through the night, from our hotel bedroom.—In front of a great cage, half filled with rabid lions, we watched their masterful control by the tamer—an exhibition of trained will for which my father had an eager zest, recalling his earlier days of the "Wild West," with Buffalo Bill, and his own taming of the wolf in Forepaugh's menagerie.

THE GIANT SKELETON: "BOYS, THIS IS WHERE IT WAS TO HAVE BEEN"

During those few wonderful days of the Fair, crowded with youthful adventures of curiosity, one unspoken desire and imminent

quest loomed ever in the background of our thoughts—too tragically sacred for questioned utterance; our desire to visit and explore that ruin of high hopes which towered above the magical vistas in grim wreck of demolition—the Spectatorium.

"All summer long (wrote the Pittsburgh Dispatch, Feb. 28, '94), throughout the period of the World's Fair, a towering incompleted, huge, skeleton-like structure glowered down upon the dainty state and foreign pavilions, and the beautiful architectural creations, at the north end of Jackson Park.—This was Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium. It was the most conspicuous object in the whole World's Fair territory, by reason of its gigantic size, peculiar appearance and half-finished condition, looking like the skeleton of some great extinct animal, cast up by Lake Michigan on the antidiluvian shores of Jackson Park."

My father, selflessly entering into our enjoyment of the great Exposition, had not wished the shadow of that shattered titan to darken or dwarf our swiftly moving pleasures.* But now, on the last full day of our visit, in the early morning—"breezy, clear and cool"—of Monday, September 25th, my diary records:

"We all went with Father to visit what might have been the Spectatorium—the half-completed achievement of a glorious idea. It was sad to see."

That September morning, where its gaunt frame still stood, looming Dantesque beyond the fairy porticos of the White City, my father, stricken in health, led my brothers and me, through cluttered débris, to an iron stairway that climbed steeply upward to nowhere.—Following his steps, silent, we ascended the dizzy height, overlooking the spacious plazas, fountains and domes of the Fair. Faintly the murmur of joyous humanity floated up to us where we stood on that edge of air. His eyes stared far off straight before him, dreamily, and his set jaw quivered. Then, for the first time, he spoke aloud:

"Boys, this is where it was to have been."

He spoke very simply. We looked in each other's eyes.—Then we descended, still silent.

"Was to have been": the words still burn. But as I descended, I said within myself: "This also is where it shall be—here in America: not his great experiment again, but the ideal which gave

^{*}On the very day we started from Shirley for the World's Fair, Sept. 21st, the Spectatorium building had been sold, to the wrecking company.

it being, and for which he has given his life-blood,—a fine art for

the people."

And still on that dizzy height I can see him standing—his strong, pale face gazing outward dreamily, beyond the stupendous ruin. There in his silence I had seen *The World Finder*.

Our five unforgettable days and nights of his companionship there were now past. The stroke of time, which summoned me east, to commence at Harvard my régime of so-called "education," called me from the presence of the most inspiring teacher of my life, to whom I owe—for the ripe fruitions of insight, love and experience, which he showered in largess on my youth—a thousandfold more, in my creative growth, than all the institutional steps toward attaining an arid degree could ever lead to.

On that last day at Chicago, he accompanied us to the train, and there with a gracious, yearning gesture of adieu, he bade us goodbye—forever.

DURING ALMOST SLEEPLESS YEARS, OBLIVIOUS OF FOOD AS SHELLEY

He lived just five months longer—five months of rising daily to strenuous labour from what had else been his death-bed but for one indefatigable purpose: to vindicate his vision and his inventions to the city of Chicago—and to the world. As this memoir throughout has revealed, he was always an indefatigable worker, but his industry was cumulative with the years.

"Steele MacKaye," wrote the La Cross, Wis., Press (in Feb., '94), "was one of the most energetic men who ever lived. It was not unusual for him to go to bed at four and get up at seven. When in the throes of producing a new scheme, he was as oblivious of whether he had eaten, or hadn't eaten, as the poet, Shelley."

"Always a tireless worker," wrote his friend, Moses P. Handy (in the Chicago Inter-Ocean, Feb. 27, '94), "MacKaye turned from one kind of work to another as a means of relaxation. For years, he would sleep only three or four hours out of the twenty-four, and sometimes less than that.—As to eating, during his last two years, the idea never seemed to occur to him, unless something was placed before him. His breakfast, for months at a time, was an apple and a glass of milk, and his dinner and his supper were the same. . . . Upon a physical system thus debilitated came the strain and stress of prolonged creative labour, the burden of vexatious financial questions, and finally the failure of the dearest object of his life. Nobody who knew him doubted what the end would be. For nearly a year, he lived solely by the exercise of his iron will."

That will of his final purpose caused him now to defy his doctors, leave his bed in pangs of physical suffering to mount ladders and scaffolding in his new workshops, testing machinery and directing workmen, in order to attain, before death, the goal he sought.

BUILDING SCENITORIUM: ARTISTS RENEW WORK IN OLD STUDIOS

To attain it, he now designed and built his fourth little theatre, to house his inventions. As formerly at the St. James and the first Madison Square Theatre, New York, he reconstructed an older building, in this case at 130 Michigan Avenue, between Madison and Monro Streets, Chicago. There he named his new structure The Scenitorium.

"It is announced," said the Chicago Tribune, in October, "that Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium, on a small scale, has secured a firm footing in the centre of the city. The revival of that novel enterprise is due to negotiations, made during the summer, which have associated Mr. MacKaye with Mr. Isaac N. Reed and Mr. Howard H. Gross, principal projectors and managers of the Chicago Fire Cyclorama. . . .

"'Unless all signs fail,' said Mr. Reed, 'this new order of entertainment conceived by Mr. MacKaye is destined to interest the public more deeply than anything he has attempted. When I returned recently from Australia, and saw what I had read so much about, I was convinced how impossible it is for such a creation to suffer more than temporary misfortune. . . . So we are closing the 'Fire Cyclorama' to make way for The World Finder. This site was the only one available for the Scenitorium, which requires a stage width of over a hundred feet. . . . In the studio back of the original Spectatorium Building, Mr. MacKaye and a force of artists and workmen have been at work, for some time past, on the new scenes and stage appliances. We hope to open some time late in November.' . . . While the Columbus story will be the motive of the first production, it is understood that other dramatic subjects are being adapted to Spectatorium treatment."

"Steele MacKaye's vindication (said a later article), as the inventor of an entirely new scenic system for theatres, is in sight. The Scenitorium is being erected on the location of the Chicago Fire Cyclorama building, where a large force of workmen are transforming the interior. The auditorium has been built up within the shell of the old cyclorama. It is practically fireproof. The parquet rises with some abruptness, providing a clear view of the stage from every seat. The stage itself is the strangest thing in the house. It is wider than it is high—apparently about 20 feet wide by 12 in height.* It is about ten times the scale of the model exhibited last spring. . . Mr. MacKaye

^{*}I. e.—the size of the proscenium opening; with behind-the-scenes, the stage was very much larger—"over a hundred feet," as stated above by I. N. Reed. The "last spring" model, here mentioned, must refer to the first, smallest model.

has carried some of his ideas about the illumination and movement of scenery much further than he had reached in the plan for the mammoth show in the original. All that can be seen now is a number of miniature railroad tracks beneath the stage line of vision, and a series of raised tracks above it. On these tracks run the trucks, supporting the scenery in the one case, and in the other the illuminants of the sun and moon.

... As I peeped beneath a tent of tarpaulin, a ray of 'sunlight' was streaming down on the yellow-white walls of La Rabida, above its sea-washed promontory; and no picture I have ever seen was so vivid as that model in miniature."

Of the art conceived by MacKaye for this Scenitorium, in which he was "carrying some of his ideas further" than in his projected Spectatorium, it is now needful to consider some aspects, in order to understand the importance of its contribution to the history of the theatre and to the scope of the theatre's future growth.

DA VINCI, WAGNER, EDISON, GANDHI: FUSION OF OCCIDENT AND ORIENT IN NEW ART

Being an art essentially realisable only by pantomime, music and spectacle, no adequate idea of this Spectatorio form can be given in words. As we have seen, the beauty of its practical realisation, on a small scale, had been twice attested by the few in Chicago, whose private view of its first working model in the spring of '92, had led them to invest in the project, and by members of the Chicago press who, a year later, had attended the public exhibition of its second, much larger model * and had expressed their unqualified praise and endorsement in published articles.

As to its author's creative ideal in its potential evolution, if we will imagine, to glorify a true popular temple, da Vinci transfiguring the art of the motion picture; Wagner—the ensemble of musical pantomime; Edison—the science of scenical technics; and these practical means infused by humanitarian aims as mystically intense as those of a Ghandi,—we shall imagine no vaster, no other ideal of the theatre's art, than that which Steele MacKaye conceived for his Spectatorium in its hoped-for future, and for which he invented and actually realised, before his death, the practical mechanism for the practice of that ideal by collaborative artists.

Scenically, its technical emphasis lay in substituting light for pigment in stage illusion: dramaturgically, in expressing the dramatic conflict of individuals—through pantomime; and of underlying forces—through the chanting of choruses (seen and unseen, related to the ensemble comment of the Greek chorus); as well as

^{*} Cf. pages ii, 379-385.

through the aspects, harmoniously changing, of the spectacle itself
—"every visible movement being endowed with some significance *:
the merely mechanical actions, as well as those distinctly artistic":
—a broad-brush, symbolic art, laid in by vast realistic touches of light and sound and motion: an art of dramatic pageantry, transplanted from outdoor plazas—roofed, transfigured, and focused for an auditorium.

Not until the present day grandiose productions of Reinhardt, based in the profounder vision of Gordon Craig, was the world to witness an indoor spectacle at all comparable in scale and imagination; and even these have never been associated with a theatre comparable in mechanical devices to those of the Spectatorium, or projected in relation to any such philosophic and humanitarian aims as those which imbued the project of Steele MacKaye, whose idea embraced a reconciliation of occident and orient in a new "harmonic poise" of the arts.

BEFORE AND BEYOND MOTION PICTURES: DYNAMIC NATURALISM: FIRST STAGE-ART OF "RELATIVITY"

Comment has already been made in these pages upon the essential relationship between some of Steele MacKaye's inventions and the long-afterward developed art of the motion picture—a relationship significant of the true records of history and to the right appraisal of a revolutionary inventor.

Equally significant, however, in relation to an art still prophetic and unattained, is the concept of a wholly new order of art presentation and expression implied (and in large measure achieved) by MacKaye's harmonious co-ordination of his twenty-five intermoving stages in the Spectatorium.

By that invention and its utilisation by him, for the first time in the theatre's history, the philosophic concept of "relativity" was provided with practical means for organic expression in art. In the Spectatorium, for the first time, the scenic stage of the theatre was conceived not simply as an instrumentality for "holding up to Nature" a perfect reflex of herself in the form of a static image, arresting and congealing an instant of her being, as in painting or sculpture; but further as an instrument, masterly controlled, for presenting her image in all the infinitely interrelated gradations and coalescings of her manifestations.

This aim indeed, since then, has in part been attained through

^{*} Cf. Steele MacKaye's own statement on page ii, 328.

the illusion produced by moving photographs, in the art of the motion picture. By its art of photography, however, the motion picture has removed the spectator from direct relationship with Nature (human and non-human). Thereby it has severed a mystic bond of reality, which no substitute for her actual presence can ever replace in such depths of appeal to the racial imagination as is made, for instance, by the visible presence of the rainbow, or by the driving mist of storm clouds, or by the aural "presence" of the human voice issuing directly in relationship with actually-present human beings. The same is true of the more recent "talking pictures," and of radio reproductions for the ear; for the transmitting mechanisms of motion-photography, of "talking pictures" and of radio, by severing all direct relationship with living reality, place the machine in the rôle of mastership instead of servitude.*

In the art of the Spectatorium, Nature herself was present as never before, or since, in the theatre. Vast mechanisms, to be sure, were used to move her bodily weight in water and plastic earthforms, and subtlest ingenuities were used to engender and precipitate her most evanescent phenomena. But these huge mechanisms and delicate inventions, for control of avoirdupois and light and chemistry, were alike utilised for the aim of all great art—the subjection of mechanical means to the imaginative import and concept to be expressed.

Thus—as used by their inventor—the correlated mechanisms of the Spectatorium, though vast and intricate, were overmastered by a synthetic imagination, which controlled them with a fluid ease, comparable to the control of an expressive gesture, or posture,† by the mind of a nobly disciplined actor, or dancer.—The effect of this perfect control of "realism" upon the imagination of a sensitively æsthetic spectator has been recorded in the comment of one who, in witnessing the results wrought by the large model, remarked:

* Such uses of "canned" light and electric "juice" are like trying to preserve the vitamins of orange juice in sealed jars. Too restricted usage of either may result in spiritual or physical scurvy.

may result in spiritual or physical scurvy.

† A revolutionary art of large-scale gesture and fluent posture, implied in Spectatorio production (to which a whole chapter might be devoted), is suggested by the italicised words in the following brief excerpt from my father's scenario The World Finder:

[&]quot;Broken and spent by his struggle with the mob, Columbus throws himself at the feet of the cross, and utters a prayer to the Christ for strength and courage to proceed. This prayer is voiced in the music of the orchestra—the pantomimic movements of Columbus being timed to each strain, even as words are to the rhythm of a song."

"This is atmosphere, the first I ever saw in a picture. That is dawn itself. It is nature in her subtlest aspect. . . . Mr. MacKaye, your art and your science together have solved the problem of absolute realism." *

In fact, this whole alleged irreconcilment between "realism" and "idealism" in art is a concern of critical nomenclature, never of creative artistry. The inexorable laws of nature imply their reconciliation.

For his Spectatorium, then, Steele MacKaye conceived and achieved a new art, generic to be sure of the later perfected motion picture, but also of discoveries more inclusive, not yet elsewhere realised—concepts peculiarly relevant to the spirit of our own today, and of our dawning to-morrow. This new art, imaginatively based in the dynamic laws of nature, I would term—for want of better designation—the Art of Dynamic Naturalism.

In the mind's eye of its inventor, in 1893 (more than a generation before Bergson and Einstein), seated in a static auditorium before the curved line of his proscenium, the spectator of Mac-Kaye's Spectatorium gazed across that arc of separation into a stage, or "scenitorium," of ever-varying dynamic change:—the potential art-arena of a "Relativity" wherein no straight lines demark the "real" illusion of a universe, which appears, in time and space, the counterpart, astronomical, meteorological and humanly historical, of reality, in its never-ceasing movement and interplay of self-relevation and eclipse.

In his Spectatorio of *The World Finder* it was, therefore, as no merely "effective" adjunct to his dramatic theme of Columbus' discovery, that the constellations of the new world hemisphere were there revealed in all their true interrelationships of light intensities, in accordance with their astronomical values in nature. Such revealment was intrinsically a part of MacKaye's own discovery of a new world of relationships between the truths of nature and those of the theatre's art—an art which he conceived as the synthesis of nature's creative dynamics (human and non-human) in the imagination of man.

For any adequate dissertation on the fertile meanings of Steele MacKaye's Spectatorio concept, the result of a life-time of thought and experiment on his part, an extensive essay at least would be needful. Here I can only offer this cursory suggestion, which, however inadequate, cannot be wholly omitted in justice to the purport of his record.

^{*} Quoted further on pages ii, 386-387.

EBBING HEALTH; ECONOMIES; TOURING OHIO; WRITING NEW CHORALS

The labours of his last months, together with his ever-active thoughts of those for whom he laboured in constantly ebbing health, are glimpsed in these excerpts of home-letters:

(Cleveland, Ohio; Oct. 17, 1893: to his daughter): "My darling Hazel:—These few lines go to you for all at home.—I am doing all the Manufacturing Towns in this state, so as to save money on our machinery and keep within the amount raised for the model exhibition.— Everything seems to be going all right, although there are many irritating delays growing out of this necessity for being very economical. . . . While I am not a John L. Sullivan, I am doing well, as to strength for my work, if I do not have any additional tax put upon me. . . . I enclose a check to help you all out. In great love and haste—Your father—Steele MacKaue."

(Chicago: Oct. 23, '93-to his wife): "Dear Heart-It will be hard work to get any more money advanced before the opening. I hope the enclosure will relieve you for a time. - I have to economise every little vibration of nerves for my work. So I told Emmie * to go home to Shirley, where I hope to be at Thanksgiving. Poor dear one! She is in terrible need of love from others !- I told her to enter into the lives of the children and thus forget her own sorrows. Tell the children to try to draw her into their amusements-walking, nutting, gathering autumn leaves and arranging lovely albums with them. Let them think, and invent levely occupations to enjoy together. . . . I received a long letter to-day from Benton † that has filled my heart with unspeakable gladness; it was so manly, so thoughtful, so sensible, and prophesied such noble development of all the precious qualities my father eyes have seen so long in his nature, that my whole soul sang with joy. I have read and reread it. - God bless him forever and forever! . . . All goes, I believe, surely toward an emphatic vindication and success, financial and artistic.-Fatigue only keeps my pen from paper.-If it were in my power, you should all live in sunlight of the divinest love and consecrating joys. . . . Yours to the deepest depths .- S. M."

(Chicago: Nov. 24):—"My dear darling Hazel:—I fear this will be a sad letter, because I am obliged to decide I can not go to you all for Thanksgiving. This is a very bitter disappointment . . . but the money to come and go is far more than we can spare, and will be more useful for all you need at home, than for taking me there, on so short a visit. Besides, progress here is very slow and, even by remaining at my post and doing my utmost, I can not get the exhibition open before the new year. . . . Moreover, I must save every bit of strength; I really have so little of it in bank. I even send you these lines through a typewriter, because the little strength thus saved is very precious to me with the

^{*} His sister, Emily, whose husband (Baron von Hesse) had recently died. †His son, Benton, then aged 14.

present burden I have to carry. . . . When you consider these things, I know you all will agree it is better I should remain here and fight out this battle, rather than imperil success. When I can go back to you all, having triumphed over all the obstacles which have so long opposed me . . . then that greater happiness hereafter will be more fully deserved.—I hope that Percy and Jack are doing splendidly at college, and that dear Aunt Sadie is very much better in health.—With love unending to you all, in great haste, Your father,—Steele MacKaye."

(Chicago: Dec. 3, '93 *):- "My dear son, Percy:-I send you the chorals I have prepared for the new production. You will see I have made many changes in your work. I have done this with no idea of bettering the work in itself, but only in order to fit it to the music, and more clearly to develop certain thoughts of my own in connection with these scenes. I have also had the temerity to write a few chorals myself, which I hope will serve their purpose, without attracting much attention to their shortcomings.—I should be very glad to have your candid opinion of this work. Any revisions, either of your work or mine, to improve the form or substance, without departing from the metre, will be exceedingly welcome to me. . . . Many of these chorals will take their cues from the portions of dialogue, read by me, and I hope, by this combination of marvelous mechanism, dramatic recitation, and music, to achieve results both popular and impressive.—The model certainly will surpass the most marvellously beautiful things that have ever yet been shown to the world in the domain of theatrical art. I think it will be a great surprise, even to those who seemed overwhelmed with the beauties of my last model.

"We shall require at least two weeks of hard rehearsing. I hope it will prove a success, because if it fails, I confess in the present depressed condition of my health, I don't know what I could do to earn the money to meet the expenses of our lives.—The chances are we shall not open before the New Year. How soon after that could you and Jack get a few days' leave from college? I am very anxious that you should witness this production, while I myself am telling the story connected with it. † I hope the financial success will be such that I shall be called from Chicago either to New York or London, there to repeat the production. . . . The terrible depression in business is, of course, against us. The weather here, also, is very severe and trying.—The snow is nearly two feet deep; most of the time the sun hides its face, and the clouds give an ashen, gloomy tone to these city streets. I am very glad none of you has to endure the melancholy rigours of winter life in this city. . . . Do let me know how you and Jack are getting on at College. With deepest solicitude and love for you both, Your father, Steele MacKaye."

* Addressed to 35 Divinity Hall, Cambridge, where I roomed at Harvard, with my brother, James.

† This was rendered (to me, tragically) impossible, owing to mid-year examinations at Harvard College.

THEMES, GREEK AND BUDDHISTIC; TRUST CHORAL; TIME AND ETERNITY CHORUSES

The chorals, above referred to, included most of those which I had written, the year before, for the Spectatorium, now revised by me, with others written by my father himself. Concerning their relation to the philosophic import of his conception, he wrote me another letter too long to include here in full, but too significant to omit entirely. On December 15, '93, amid his painful illness, he dictated these graciously kind and thoughtful words, addressed to me at college, in Cambridge:

"My dear son Percy: I have to thank you for the many suggestions, concerning the chorals, which I shall adopt. I regret to say, however, I am forced to disagree with your views of my explanation of these chorals to the public. I recognise, without hesitation, your superior poetic sense, but I think the disposition of my mind, as well as the special studies of my dife, have given me a keener and safer philosophic sense than you at present possess.-My division and sub-division of the Chorus were not haphazard; they are the result of a very carefully considered philosophy. You seem to fear that my terms will not be clear to the general public. I do not expect the mass of the people to comprehend me at all, but neither would they comprehend the form which you have sent me. . . . In presenting my production for the first time, all the portion of it really comprehensible by the populace will need no explanation—but that portion which gives it its profoundest value must be presented in terms the philosophic can understand. . . . I must, therefore, differentiate my choruses, according to the rationale of the philosophy which lies behind and dignifies the creation I have sough; to contribute to my age and time. I cannot afford to talk in terms that may seem more comprehensible, while in reality they can never be comprehensible.-If my creation has the lasting substance, which is to make it live, its fundamental philosophy will be found out, and will gradually educate the public up to its own level. Meantime, it cannot afford to confuse itself by tumbling to the irrational, vague, slipshod method of thought which prevails with the mass of people.-At the risk of being prolix, I will try to point out the rationale on which my production is based. . . .

"The moment the Spirit of the Part separates itself from the Whole in purpose, or desire, then discord is the result; then error, illusion, lust, everything vicious, spiritually speaking, is the result. . . . In the individual life of man, the Self is the Spirit of the Part; and only in so far as it turns reverently, and with worshipful love, toward the Spirit of the Whole, does it lose its illusions and grow toward supreme enlightenment. . . Now, all literature, all art, addresses itself to the Conscious Order of Time: and if it does not do so consistently it will not be potent. When it does so, however, then even those who do not comprehend its philosophy are thereby made to feel more profoundly the influence of the truth.—So with my Eternity Chorus, which is abso-

lutely psychologic in its character; in order to be potent, it must voice the selfless Spirit of the Whole: the substance of cosmic, or timeless order. . . . Now, these perhaps are very subtle and difficult distinctions for your mind to follow, but they underlie and rule my work.

"The idea is to suggest—by the slow, subtle, gradual opening of the doors upon the scene—the gradual unfolding of life, its eternal value and purpose which grow out of the Cosmic Order. The closing of the doors suggest that return to rest-that passage into the eternal statewhich necessarily is devoid of all processes puzzling, tormenting, and degrading to the individual. . . . You will notice that these chorals are not Christian, nor Semitic in character, nor even yet distinctly pagan. If they suggest any 'ism at all, it is Buddhism, which is undoubtedly the oldest and most long-lived light of this world. . . . The music associated with these door-chorals is Greek in character, and is quite different from all the masic associated with the Catholic or Christian story, which is presented between these chorals. . . . Of course, these chorals of mine are quite unworthy, in their present literary form, of my conception; but they are the best my poor abilities at present permit; and they are a beginning that will doubtless, hereafter, be vastly improved upon by other philosophic creators, who may take up and develop this form of art, if, as I hope, it has a lasting function to perform for the human race.

"The artistic effect, and the spiritual influence of the slow closing of the doors upon the final vision, its glory fading as they close, can only be determined by experiment.—My own impression is that the music, which is serene, restful, full of spiritual poise and strength, will prove to be the end most artistic, as well as most spiritually useful, in this order of production. . . . I can not tell you how much I thank you for taking time from your studies, and adding to the strain of your life by your prompt attention to the work I sent you.—Thank also your dear mother for her many valuable suggestions. I think, among us all, we can succeed in giving to the world a very fair literary effort.—Your lov-

ing father, Steele MacKaye."

A CREDO OF VICTORY; SUPER-SPECTATORIO OF FRENCH REVOLUTION, FOR PARIS, 1900

Few men have ever lived more fully the life of the artist than my father. Contemplation and creation of the beautiful were for him a zest of consciousness amounting at times to ecstasy. Such passionate pursuit of æsthetic objects in life is often superficially assumed to be incompatible with an equal zest for the moral aims of courage, tolerance and loving kindness, in building a vertebrate structure of human character. For him, however, the keen sensibilities of æsthetics and ethics were indissolubly blended: art and religion were in substance "one and inseparable." How simply yet intensely this was so, is evident in the following letter to my brother, Benton, wherein he states a credo of his own victory.

(Chicago; 4541 Lake Ave., Dec. 14, '93): "My dear boy, Ben: I am going to use a few spare moments to send you these lines. Your last letter filled me with great pride and joy, for it showed that you are developing into a very thoughtful and manly youth.—The great thing at your time of life, is to realise that the life which you must eventually face among your fellow men is a battle, and the victory depends upon certain qualities of heart, mind and will, which have always been successful.

"These qualities are courage; perseverance; patience; a just and even generous consideration of the rights of others, with a firm will to maintain your own; good common sense; calm judgment; self-control, striving not to let the circumstances of life, or the wrongs which others do you, excite you to lose command over your own faculties; the capacity to judge what is wise to do, and then to do it without fear or procrastination; a determination to develop all faculties of your mind which may assist you to acquire skill in creating values, or in performing a function, which the world is always ready to pay for; incorruptible integrity; a horror and loathing of the vulgar; a detestation of deceit; a scorn of low companionship; a delight in the society of the superior; and that everlasting aspiration towards all noblest in human character itself, which will surely guide you to the best sort of success this life can confer.

"Remember that every time we serve others they are in our debt, but that every time we ask others to serve us we put ourslves into their debt; that as long as the world lasts, the creditor—whether it be in money, or in loving service,—will always be superior to the debtor. Cultivate stern self-censure and profound self-respect, at the same time that you develop the greatest charity of judgment for others, and the greatest tenderness for the failings of your fellow-man.—If you can only get the full consciousness of the wisdom of this course into your memory, understanding and heart, you can not fail in this life, and you will be prepared for the noblest career in any other life that may come.

"I send you these serious words now, because you are just at that time of life when the thought of these things will be of greatest service in shaping your future. I trust these poor words of mine may be of some help to you, in the fight which every one has with his own disinclination to do the work which the moment calls upon him to do, and may assist you to strive after that magnificent manhood which is the crowning glory of this life,—the best and richest gift life's battle can bestow upon the hero who faces it. . . . Good luck, good courage, and God bless you, my dear son!—With a father's deepest love and bene-

diction, yours-Steele MacKaye."

CHAPTER XXXII

"THE WORLD-FINDER"

Chicago

Dec., '93-Feb., '94

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW: A STILL VASTER DREAM

In the shadow of Death, the MIND of Steele Mackaye was still tenanted by stupendous dreams—plans which, had he lived, would probably have shaped his after-career for many years. These plans included, as the first of a series of grandoise festival productions throughout Europe,* a new "Super-Spectatorio" production, referred to in this excerpt from the Chicago Herald (March 1, '94):

"There was one secret which Steele MacKaye kept, and in its execution he hoped to die a happy man. It was a scheme more colossal than the Spectatorium, and in it he planned to show the stage art what it will not know now for half a century. It was a grand production of the story of the French Revolution.—His head, whose capacity seemed infinite, was full of the project, and his ambition was to startle the entire world in Paris during the exposition of 1900. A building, too gigantic in proportions and appliances to be popularly comprehensive, had been conceived, and as soon as this wizard of the theatre craft had put to route his critics, he intended to seek the city of his first triumphs and teach the Old World lessons."

But he was never to return to the Old World. On the date of his foregoing letter to his son, Benton (Dec 14 †), he dictated another letter, addressed in New York to his old friend, Dr. Edward Bradley, who had attended the last illness of his son, Will. This letter glimpses the rapid on-coming of the end:

"Dear old Doc.:—I have been ill for many months. When I last saw you, you gave me a prescription for a liquid nerve and brain food, which helped me very much. I am desperately in need of some kind of nourishment which my stomach can digest. If you can remember that prescription, I would be so grateful if you would send me a copy of it here. . . . Since we parted, I have been far down into the Valley, and

^{*} Cf. page ii, 302.

to the day after this letter was written, while these dark circumstances were shadowing Steele MacKaye in Chicago, on Dec. 15, '93, in New York, the first performance of Dvorák's New World Symphony (originally intended for the Spectatorium) was rendered under direction of Anton Seidl. Cf. page ii, 362.

learned a good deal concerning the darkness of its depths. I am still hoping, in spite of my prostrate condition, that I may yet recover sufficiently to do a little more work in the world. . . . I have not the strength to write, so I dictate these lines. Remember me to the loyal ones who love me, and give them all my benediction.—With the most affectionate salutations to yourself.—Your grateful friend, Steele."

On January 1, '94, he telegraphed to my mother, at Shirley, where she herself was lying rather critically ill:

"Happy New Year to all! Everything going well here."

These words of good cheer, however, conveyed no idea of his own state of extreme suffering and hopeless ill health, which—not wishing to give us worry—he kept from all of us except my brother, Harold, who with rare devotion left his own work in Pittsburgh, to assist my father during the last weeks of preparation for the opening of the Scenitorium, postponed from week to week since late November.*

PRIVATE PRESS VIEW, JAN. 26: "MACKAYE'S NEW REGIME RENDERS BEST EFFORTS OF 19TH CENTURY STAGE PRODUCERS CRUDE AND UNSATISFACTOY"

At last, on Friday, January 26th, a private exhibit was given to a few invited guests, including members of the press. Of this, the next day, the Chicago Evening Post reported, under the heading—"MacKaye's Big Plan—Scenitorium Enterprise Will Make a Great Sensation—New Era in Stage Lighting":

"The performance will be a revelation in the art of combining light and music with stage accessories on a gigantic scale. . . . It is very difficult adequately to describe this great invention, concerning which the most prominent scenic artists in the country estimate that Mr. Mac-Kaye's ideas will revolutionise the scenic art of the day, and will make the very best efforts of nineteenth century stage-producers seem crude and unsatisfactory. There will be countless novelties both before and behind the curtain of electricity . . . developed by the most intricate motive mechanism ever devised and put to practical use. . . . A clever invention enables the manipulator of the three vessels to move them around in the foreground as if sailing. . . . False prosceniums will be adjusted to the stage opening and enable the scenes of various sizes to be brought to the proper focal size. . . . In ordinary theatres, the eye is constantly offended by the ragged drops of canvas which are

^{*} Artists who worked under my father's direction, in making the Scenitorium scenes of *The World Finder*, were F. C. Peyraud, Frank Berberstein, E. J. Austen and O. D. Grover. Of these Mr. Peyraud's and Mr. Grover's significant after-careers are listed in "Who's Who in America."

supposed to do duty as ceilings and in out-of-door scenes must be called the 'canopy of heaven.' In that respect, the stage has not advanced very far since Shakespeare's time. . . . Henceforth Mr. MacKaye has created a new régime.

"In the auditorium also are important entirely new modifications. The lights at the back of the auditorium will not be pervasive enough to affect the scenes on the stage, while ample for all purposes of illuminating the interior. . . . Where the proscenium boxes are usually located, the space is occupied by small platforms, upon one of which (a concealed platform, at the 'prompter's entrance') Mr. MacKaye will take his position in delivering his explanatory lecture and manipulating the electric connections, that connect him with every person concerned in the operation of the performance. . . . The boxes are in the centre of the house, and form the division between the parquet and the dress circle. . . . In electricity, over a dozen new and important inventions made by Mr. MacKaye during the last twelve years enter into the devices that furnish effects never before seen in connection with the stage. . . . There have been installed more lineal feet of electric wire than are used in all the theatres of New York City, combined. In this particular alone the dramatic world is about to receive a striking object-lesson."

On the same day (Sat., Jan. 27), these further comments and data were published in the Chicago Elite News, under caption of *The World Finder:*

\$50,000 CONSTRUCTION: ORIGINAL AUDITORIUM, TERRA COTTA AND BLACK,
CONCENTRATES VISUALITY UPON STAGE

"At the Press View yesterday afternoon, expectations aroused by the mystery that has so long enveloped this novel enterprise were more than realised.—At first glance, the interior of the Scenitorium building -remodelled at a cost of nearly \$50,000,—is disappointing to one who looks for decorations found in prominent theatres. The auditorium is fitted up most comfortably, yet with no attempt at colour effects. The tints of the walls run from fawn to terra cotta, with black base line; and the chairs are all finished in dead black. This, however, is all purposely done, in order that the entire light of the house, during the performance, may be concentrated on the stage. . . . The stage arrangement is totally unlike that of the ordinary theatre. The proscenium opening is small, and instead of a curtain, sliding doors are used. Coloured electric lights are massed around the outer frame of these doors. . . . The orchestra and choruses are concealed from sight, and occupy changeable positions back of the scene, according to the varying demands of the representation. . . . The music is rendered by an invisible chorus with orchestral support, the chorus being divided into two sections-the "Chorus of Time" and the "Chorus of Eternity." . . . These choruses are easily distinguishable, because the chorals expressing the views of Time have no instrumental accompaniment, while the chorals revealing the spiritual sentiments of the Eternal world are always sung with instrumental accompaniment.

"The World Finder is in two acts. In the first there are nine scenes, covering incidents in the career of Columbus prior to his embarkation for the new world. In the second act are six scenes, representing the voyage to San Salvador and the final success of the great quest.

... Mr. MacKaye's lecture accompanying these impressive scenes traces the life of Columbus through its most exciting incidents.

There are thirty-two chorals, with original music composed by Mr. Frederick Archer, the musical director.

The scenes representing the Old Inn at Valladolid, the Death Bed of the World Forsaken, and the Celestial Vision of a Dying Hero, are thrillingly interesting; and the Celestial Music Finale, brings to a close an unique form of entertainment."

These public announcements convey nothing of the poignant situation behind the scenes which was soon "to bring to a close" the drama alike of the dramatist and of his production.

"For three days and three nights preceding the opening of his Scenitorium," wrote the Chicago Herald (Feb. 26, '94), "Steele Mac-Kaye lay upon a couch in the theatre, and directed the details of the production. His diet was milk, occasionally with a cracker."

On December third, my father had written me: "We shall need at least two weeks of hard rehearsing." By February, on the eve of opening, he had had but one hurried rehearsal of the ensemble.— On February first, from the Hotel Richelieu, he dictated from his bed this letter to Elwyn A. Barron, dramatic critic of the Chicago Inter-Ocean, who, during the previous July, had given his warm public support to my father's last efforts to save the Spectatorium from destruction: *

FEB. 1: "MECHANISM FAR FROM READY"; "THE MOST TERRIBLE EMERGENCY OF MY LIFE"

"My dear Mr. Barron: I am about to face the most terrible emergency of my life, upon the success of which depends my entire future and probably my physical fate.—I am about to make a production which I, at one time, hoped would vindicate me as an artist before this community, but under such appalling conditions that I feel I must do what I can, in advance, to protect myself from the misunderstanding of one who has shown, in the past, such consideration and sense of justice as yourself. I take, therefore, this means of laying before you a statement of the facts surrounding the production of The World Finder, which I am forced to make to-morrow night, by circumstances over which I have no control, without even having the privilege of more than one hasty rehearsal of the complicated mechanism, which it is

^{*} Cf. Elwyn Barron's statement, on page ii, 413.

essential to operate with the greatest nicety, in order to do justice to

my conception.

"The dangerous condition of my health, during the last few months, has postponed the opening until postponement is no longer possible without absolute financial collapse. In the brief intervals between terrible pangs and complete prostration, I have endeavoured to direct, most of the time from a sick bed, the construction and organisation of the Scenitorium. I have, under the same conditions, directed the writing of the chorals, and the rehearsals of the same.—The mechanicians have been promising completion, week after week. I was told positively, when I consented to opening on February 2nd, that I should have my mechanism completely finished for at least five days' rehearsal. I know, now, that my mechanism will be far from complete on the opening night. I can only present a very partial and imperfect picture, and make but a very faint suggestion of the production, with which I had hoped to celebrate the great event commemorated by the World's Fair.

"I am prepared for the worst, and crave no exemption from honest criticism of the mutilated production, which circumstances force me to make at the risk of my reputation as an artist. I ask only that you, who have shown some faith in me, may not misjudge me, by accepting this work as any just indication of what the whole might have been. -I am not writing these lines to you as a critic, but as a man, and the only man who, in the day of my disaster, had the heart of courage to demand a suspension of public opinion, in my case, until I had had an opportunity of showing the public, at some later day, what the real intent of my Spectatorium was.-You must not misunderstand me by thinking that I send these words with any desire to influence you in your public criticism of my production, for your first duty in that respect is to your public and your own reputation.-Please treat these lines as entirely confidential, and sent you only because it is hard for me to disappoint, as I now feel I must, the faith in me as an artist, which prompted you to use your pen to lessen the weight of my burden in the darkest hour of my life. I want you to know that I appreciate your words more than I shall ever be able to show you. and unless this production should prove a fiasco beyond all possibility of redemption, I hope, within fifteen days of the opening, to be able to show you more clearly that your past faith was not misplaced .-With heartfelt greetings, I remain—Faithfully yours, Steele MacKaye."

GREETINGS FROM WM. AND MADGE KENDALL; SCENITORIUM OPENS: $THE \ \ WORLD \ \ FINDER-2 \ \ ACTS, \ 12 \ \ SCENES$

On the following day (Feb. 2), the Chicago newspapers published announcements of the opening, for which the ten boxes had been sold, amongst others, to "Messrs. George M. Pullman, S. D. Kimbark, E. B. Butler, J. P. Mallette, E. W. Gillett, C. H. McVickers, and Dr. A. P. Gillmore, the President of the company."—That evening, my father received from the two very popular English

stage-favourites, "the Kendalls,"—who were then in St. Paul, Minn., on an American acting tour,—this telegram:

"We heartily wish you all and every success to-night. Hope you are better. Kindest regards from both. William and Madge Kendall."

The opening of the Scenitorium, however, was again postponed until the following Monday night, February 5th,* thus announced in the Chicago News Record:

"MacKaye's big show was postponed until Monday night, because 'the genius of Gotham' was too ill to direct the work. Many hundreds of persons were disappointed. . . . The scenitorio, to be given for an indefinite period in the Scenitorium, realises the life-long dream of an eminent genius. Nothing like it, or approaching it, as a work of wonder-building has ever been attempted."

AUTHOR CARRIED ON TO STAGE: "HIS ART CHALLENGES NATURE HERSELF:
THE TRIUMPH OF STEELE MACKAYE AS AN INVENTOR OF
EXTRAORDINARY GENIUS IS ASSURED"

On the opening night, this statement was read by the manager of the Scenitorium, before my father was carried in from his sick bed at the Hotel Richelieu:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: In justice to Mr. MacKaye, I deem it my duty to present certain facts to you to-night, before he proceeds to tell you the story of The World Finder. . . . The opening of the Scenitorium has been postponed and delayed continuously because of the very painful and dangerous illness of Mr. MacKaye. He has been forced to direct the construction of this complicated machinery and its rehearsal for to-night, under conditions which would have been utterly crushing to a will less strong than his. The result has been that the work, which he, alone, knew how to direct, has been necessarily very slow; and now, to-night, we are in honesty bound to confess to you that Mr. MacKaye comes before you as an artist with his instrument still incomplete and very far from in tune. In addition to this, very trying circumstances, entirely beyond his control, have denied him the opportunity of obtaining but one complete rehearsal of his work before presenting it to you. . . . I am, therefore, forced to ask of you your most charitable consideration for any hitches or shortcomings which may occur to-night. As Mr. MacKaye is not strong enough to stand in your presence, while telling his story, I beg you to permit him the privilege of being seated while conducting this production."

^{*} Almost exactly fourteen years earlier, Feb. 4, 1880, his *Hazel Kirke* had opened his Madison Square Theatre, New York. In 1894, it was still being acted on tour by Charles W. Couldock (the original *Dunstan Kirke*), with no remuneration to its (anonymous!) author.

Seldom, in the theatre's history, has a dramatist appeared on a "first night" under more humanly appealing circumstances. "For the temporary defects in the production" (entirely remedied after the first night) "he made a touching and humorous apology in advance," wrote the critic of the Chicago Times (Feb. 6, '94), from whose article these are some excerpts:

"Some idea of what Steele MacKaye aims at accomplishing in what he calls a 'scenitorio' was vouchsafed to a large and distinguished audience at the new Scenitorium, last night.-While it can cheerfully be admitted that what was really a rehearsal revealed enough of Mr. Mac-Kaye's wonderful handling of stage illuminating-a department in which his inventions seem certain to work a revolution—to justify all the claims made for the exhibition, it is only just to add that last night's production was much broken by accidents, almost inevitable in such complicated interweaving of new ideas, mechanical, musical, and philosophical.—One thing is certain: Mr. MacKaye has shown the world something new, startling, and beautiful in stage scenic effects. There are in his scenitorio pictures of wondrous charm, approaching so closely to perfect realism as to challenge nature herself. This much was clear in spite of a 'busted' cyclone and erratic machinery . . . Moses P. Handy appropriately recalled the greater Spectatorium, of which this is a reflection in miniature, when he came forward and described the origin of the enterprise, the difficulties besetting its completion, the noble ambition and tremendous labours of its inventor, Steele MacKaye. Mr. Handy, moreover, told of Mr. MacKaye's severe illness and his stubborn determination to go to the end, in spite of friends' entreaties and physicians' commands.

"A moment later, when Mr. MacKaye was assisted to a chair on the stage, Mr. Handy's statement was verified by the ghastly pallor of the author-inventor's face and his evident feebleness. But to the astonishment of all, Mr. MacKaye proved much stronger than he looked. He made a touching and humorous apology in advance for the defects in the production, laying particular stress upon the cruel collapse of the wind apparatus at the last moment, putting the storm at sea and divers cyclonic and atmospheric effects out of the question.—

The audience showed a most commendable spirit of sympathy and Mr. MacKaye was evidently much cheered by the loud applause which

continually greeted the evolution of the pictorial drama.

There was plenty of reason for applause. In the first scene (La Rabida), the stage, at first perfectly dark, blossomed with a sunny land-scape of Spain. As the doors, in lieu of curtain, drew back, the rocky mount stood out with glaring white walls and the red tile roof of the convent. In this scene, a beautiful incident was the celestial vision which illumined the darkest hour in Columbus' struggle. At this point, the sky was suddenly darkened; then from it burst a great congregation of angels, and Christ was seen, amid a number of the world's rejected, pointing to the earth floating in space, with the western

hemisphere dimly outlined. . . . The curtain of light blotted out the scene as effectually as any curtain ever devised. When the lights were again lowered, the witching outline of the city of Santa Fé came into view, its palaces lit up in the foreground, while behind twinkled the lights of the watchful moslem in the minarets of the mosques at Granada. Gradually the moonlight gave way to rosy dawn, that revealed a superb vista of city and plain, running back in far distance to the snow-capped Sierra Nevadas. In this scene, also, the growth of daylight and all the effects of sun and shadow were given with extraordinary accuracy. To the scene which succeeded this gorgeous pageant was added the mystical poetry of the ocean.

"It is the little town of Palos, but at first we can see only lights in the church on the hill and some houses on the shore. From the church comes the glorious melody of a Gregorian mass which mingles strangely, ever and anon, with the boisterous song of sailors drowning their fears before the awful voyage. . . . Day breaks on the quaint outlines of caravels lying at anchor in the bay. Light grows and out of mist emerge the windmill on the hill, the wide stretch of sea, the low-lying line of the shore. . . . Signal is given; anchor weighed; the tiny barks set out to sea; we go with them. The town slips away—we are abreast the lighthouse at the harbor mouth—at last (splendid realism it is!) the coast sinks down the horizon and naught but the great, green desert of waters meets the eye. The missing windapparatus could hardly have heightened the wonder of this scene.

"So the perilous voyage of Columbus is pictured with a degree of verity never compassed before. . . . The final scenes contain as much wondrous novelty and true beauty as the first act. Mr. MacKaye accompanied all with his own narrative of the Columbian voyage; and the organ, the orchestra, the choruses, sacerdotal in tenderness and solemnity, lent their potent though invisible aid in making poetry of the play. . . . The audience gave the whole a rousing reception. The triumph of Steele MacKaye, as an inventor of extraordinary genius, is assured."

"NOTHING LIKE IT: ALPHA AND OMEGA OF ITS ART": "A LIGHT THAT NEVER YET WAS"

"On that opening night," wrote the Chicago Herald (Feb. 26, '94), "MacKaye disobeyed his physicians and was carried to the theatre. He had completed his lecture, a masterly work of literature, and—as a last public act—he insisted on reading it. He could not stand, and as the marvellous colour effects and new devices were shown, the audience feared the eloquent talker would faint from exhaustion. . . The first burst of applause was the tonic. It thrilled him. His face lighted, as it did in the days, when it was as easy for him to create a dozen fortunes, as for the ordinary man to make one. Page after page he read, and when the last light-curtain was turned on—strong arms carried him to his carriage and into the hotel."

[&]quot;The pledge of the projector of the ill-fated Spectatorium," wrote

the critic of the Chicago Post (Feb. 6), "has been fully redeemed. Mr. MacKaye promised 'an entirely new kind of entertainment.' And such is the scenitorio. Daring as is the conception, and elaborate its execution, the probability is that Mr. MacKaye's creation will not be imitated often, if at all. The World Finder will remain the only one of its kind, in solitary glory. This scenitorio will be the Alpha and Omega of its art; in The World Finder the individual is the species, and the species is also the genus. . . . But despite its impracticability as a prototype, Mr. MacKaye's structure is remarkable as a specimen of what energy and idealism can accomplish; and it is worth while for every Chicagoan to see-and hear-The World Finder at least once. . . . There has been nothing like it; therefore it cannot be described by the usual methods of comparison. It is an impressive combination of lights, colour, music, elocution and phantasmagoric effects-grand and peculiar. He who goes to witness it should take his imagination with him. He should seek, with Mr. MacKaye, a sublimated consciousiness, to rise into the ether of fancy, where the observer hears a voice that others do not hear and sees a light that never yet was seen on sea or land,"

"SUPERB RECEPTION: MACKAYE HAS TRIUMPHED—HIS NAME IMMORTALISED
—STAGE PRODUCTION REVOLUTIONISED"

In the Chicago Inter-Ocean, Feb. 6, appeared this moving report of the occasion by its dramatic critic, Elwyn A. Barron:

"If Steele MacKaye had any doubt of the friendly feeling entertained for him by the people of Chicago, it must have vanished into thin mist last evening, when a large audience of the best citizens greeted him with an enthusiasm which might have moved a man less self-restrained to tears. It was a superb reception, a prolonged applause mingled with half-suppressed cries of gratulation, that indicated how deep has been the popular sympathy with this man, who for so great a time has toiled to the wasting of health and strength for the accomplishment of the artistic purpose within him. No wonder his wan cheek flushed; the deep, melancholy eyes lighted with fire of new courage; and a smile, that was but the ghost of old cheer, parted for an instant the lips that have drunk hyssop for a year.

"But what a spectacle was this upon which this profoundly sympathetic assembly gazed! A few short months ago, and Steele MacKaye was the type of a splendid physical manhood, his massive frame the very symbol of health and power, fit tabernacle for a mind of prodigious energy and a spiritual force that seemingly knew no limitations—now emaciated and feeble; his firm, erect figure stooped and dependent: only the mind, clear, alert, indomitable, to proclaim the Steele MacKaye of scarce a year ago.—It was enough to cause the eyes of all those who knew him to flood with pitying drops; but there was something about the man that yet seemed masterful, and the applause that may have begun in sympathy with the man swelled into double volume through admiration of the genius. . . . When he was supported to his

chair, there was a sense of shock to all who looked upon this mockery of the man who once seemed made of iron, and not until the voice was heard, with much of its old resnonance and volume, did the grateful audience feel that Mr. MacKaye was equal to the enjoyment of a

triumph.

"He did triumph. Not, perhaps, as he had hoped to triumph, nor as the audience expected he would, for the representation, intricate and delicate, had more than an ordinary first night's difficulties to contend with; but so far in excess of what reasonably could have been looked for, that accidents and delays counted for nothing against this demonstration that he has found the way to revolutionise stage productions. The magnificent achievement of the scenitorio is its use of electricity for producing light and shade in all degrees and conditions of atmospheric effect. Mr. MacKaye is the first artistic scientist who has been able so to control electric lighting that he can give to stage views all the versimilitude of night and day as perfectly and imperceptibly as if it were the very method of nature. Its perfection lies in this extreme fidelity of gradual transitions. . . . Had there been nothing else last night than the scene of the second act-a clear sunset in the tropic seas, softening into the entrancing blue of an evening sky, that mysteriously bloomed with glorious constellations-Mr. MacKave would be entitled to the highest praise. . . . Astonishing is the effect of tremendous distance given to the sea views, the water—and it is real water. -seeming to stretch away in vast expanse, though but a modest stage depth is actually used. . . . There are fifteen different scenes, each a work of art and beauty. Ideally beautiful are the sunset with constellations and the vision scene. . . . The applause that marked all these unfoldings was as hearty as it was frequent. . . . For the choral work Mr. Archer has composed music of much power, dignity, and originality. . . . Mr. MacKaye's description is admirable and intense in feeling. A little abbreviated, however, it will suffer no loss of literary interest and will be more popular as a romantic guide to the scenes.

"It is understood, of course, that the Scenitorio lacks the dramatic action designed to fill the scenes of the vaster Spectatorium. Instead of the actors appearing, the author reads a description of what would be depicted in action by characters, were the play given in its completeness, . . . The scenes are miniatures, mere models of the real conception. But as the various scenes passed in review, and the author in eloquent language recounted the incidents in relation to his personages, one marvelled what The World Finder would have been, produced at the Spectatorium, when such superb and impressive results can be got from the mere illustration in little of the life and action intended for an army of trained and competent actors. . . . Despite his bondage to disease, despite the years of secure living bartered for an inventor's privilege, Steele MacKaye has triumphed; has demonstrated to the intelligent that he was no mad dreamer, but an inspired prophet and pioneer; and whatever may be the fate of his scenitorio in public regard, he has done that for the stage which will immortalise his name to the

theatre "

In response to the spirit of this public expression by Elwyn Barron,* my father wrote him, on Feb. 8th:

"Dear Mr. Barron: For the last three days, I have been trying to find a moment when the strain of rehearsals would leave me the strength to express to you my overwhelming sense of obligation for your generous article of Tuesday morning. Those words from you have requited me for months of indescribable misery of mind and body. So long as memory lasts, the thought of you will always fill my heart with feelings of the deepest gratitude, and all that is aspiring and manly in

myself will go out to you in salutation and benediction.

"Thank God, there was one heart to understand, and one head to appreciate what I was trying to do, in spite of the many blemishes of that terrible first night. When I tell you it is absolutely a fact that first exhibition before the public was the only complete rehearsal of my mechanism that circumstances had vouchsafed me, you can understand my suffering and the sensitive consciousness I had of the short-comings of that first performance.—To me, the whole thing seemed a fiasco. The warm-hearted applause of the public seemed but a tribute of sympathy for a sick man, not in any true sense of recognition of any achievement, worthy of the occasion, by the artist who had hoped so long, and struggled so hard, to at last give the public of this community a fair idea of the work he came here to do in connection with the grand Exposition.—The gentleness of the press generally with me has touched me profoundly. Your generosity has made my heart and soul forever your own.

"I am striving, now, gradually to improve the presentation as far as it goes. If the public will grant the Scenitorium sufficient patronage to keep it in existence a few weeks longer, I hope, ultimately, to arrive at some fair realisation of the ideals which I intended to present on the first night. But whatever the fate of my project may be financially, my debt to you as a man and an artist will always remain the same—unpayable and imperishable.—Yours in deep sincerity, Steele Mac-

Kave."

"ANAXIMINES OF AMERICA-HIS DISCOVERIES OPEN A NEW WORLD"

On the next day (Feb. 9th)—after my father's fourth appearance at his production—the dramatic critic of the Chicago News published a long critique, remarkable for its insight into certain mystic qualities of Steele MacKaye's personality which motivated all his career. In the following excerpts, that article (like another by a discerning commentator †) distinguishes those traits of intense concentration—a kind of stellar remoteness from a world of sordid commonplaces—which characterised his imaginative life in common with that of the poet, Shelley, who delighted to launch his "jaunty

† Cf. page ii, 426.

^{*} Cf., in Appendix, Elwyn Barron's statement, in 1926.

little caravels" on miniature magic seas, in a cosmos of "calm watchers, holy teachers, and studying children," wherein the afterworld "lives sweeter for his charmed ideas!"

"There is something pitifully tragic in the miniature beauty of Steele MacKaye's Scenitorium—that epitome of his poetic expanse of ideas. . . . Steele Mackage is one of the luminous inventors of the century. His command of the mysteries in mechanic arts and in amphichroic chemistry characterises him as the Anaximenes of America. . . . He is the incarnation of personal and spiritual magnetism. He can win the most sceptic to his following and gain the profound respect of thinkers. The wonders of his creative faculties will live, strengthen and illuminate the centuries to come, but Steele MacKaye himself has never known the content of their perfect realisation, because in his lofty aims he is alone, set apart, a creator for whom there are no workmen fit to cope with his elusive, herculean inventions. This helplessness of labour, even among fine subordinates, checkmates MacKaye's strategic measures. . . . He sees afar into that which can be, and the world lives sweeter for his charmed ideas. - In the great war of science and art against the elements and the rebellious material of nature, Steele MacKaye is a divinely appointed spy, who knows the vulnerable intrenchments of the enemy, reads the silent signs of manœuvre, and gives indisputable telepathic alarms.

"His Scenitorium is but a fragmentary illustration of what the great Spectatorium might have been, and its solemnity commends it most to calm watchers at the altar of chronology, to holy teachers, and deep thinkers. Still, with its own contrariness, this beautiful symphony of music, scenic art, optical illusion, and mysterious mechanism must appeal to studying children. . . . The jaunty, little model caravels, the life-like panorama, the fairy disappearances of seas, castles, vivid pictures, and the air full of songs-all are certain to delight inquiring minds, to impress them with splendour of history, and with the varying loveliness of nature. . . . The reading with which Mr. MacKaye accompanies the Scenitorio is profoundly religious, but nothing less could be in keeping with the dramatic career of Columbus. It is indeed Mr. MacKaye's tragic misfortune that, after nearly a year's delay in his production, just at this ribald and gorged moment, America is satiated with the great discoverer.—This ungrateful state of sentiment is very human and will probably interfere with the immediate financial reward for Mr. MacKaye's superb contribution to discoveries in the aggregate as splendid as the opening up of a new world.

"For that reason, a visit to the Scenitorium results in supreme regret that he might not have succeeded in completing his monster model theatre, the Spectatorium. Yet it is inspiring to find one man in theatricals who devotes himself, in all his splendid mental equipment, to the aggrandisement of the profession which, though so closely knit with art and mechanical science, is for most part content to offer abortive music, contumacious wit, cheap spectacle and heinous contor-

tion of dramatic art, for money that a public would rather spend in such debasements, than in gentle persuasion of beauty, truth, and the proofs of heaven's beneficence to man.—Cultured people will enjoy the Scenitorio; the vulgar will not understand it; but MacKaye's extraordinary gifts to invention are revealed and perpetuated in the little theatre, where his genius has imprisoned its most electric results.

"It is an appealing picture to see Steele MacKaye absorbed in the romance of Columbus, -his thin, intense face quickened into spiritual fervour by his own belief in his great production. His voice lent brave accents to his wrecked physical capacity, which gathered magic strength from his own convictions. . . . He is just able to creep into an easy chair, with the help of a constantly attending physician. But once there, with the mystic reins of his inventions in his waxen hands, the written sermon under his restless eyes, he becomes a being fed by spirit music. There he glows, self-driven into vigour and a hollow power which, as he finishes, fades like his own luxauleator, shut off suddenly from its battery.- In these rests between chapters of his lecture, he leans helplessly upon his attendant. . . . This appearance of Steele MacKaye is tremendously dramatic.—A masked arc light throws its rays about his pale face; his long black hair falls in damp waves about his high forehead, and the unexpected gleams of fire from his eyes give the uncanny personality Doré chooses for his nobler demons."

"SUCCESSFULLY LAUNOHED": "OUR COUNTRY'S GREATEST STAGE MASTER"

Summing up the first week of the performances, a Chicago newspaper wrote (on Sunday, Feb. 11):

"The great show, which Mr. Steele MacKaye successfully launched during the past week, is, after a few performances, running with great smoothness, without a hitch of any kind. Of course, Mr. MacKaye is dealing with inanimate machinery, more easily handled than a mass of flesh-and-blood actors, with ideas and ways of their own; but it shows forcibly what a great mechanician the author must be, to set in motion such complicated thousands of connections and adjustments, and secure practical perfection on the second or third public trial. . . . Mr. Mac-Kave feels natural elation at his success, and the public has begun to find its way to the Scenitorium in paying numbers. Performances commence at 8:15 and close at 10:30. . . . Many had indulged in prophecies that the thing would not work, but they are now singing small; those who came to deride have stayed to admire, and have gone away under the spell of the greatest stage master of our country. . . . Steele MacKaye is so entirely a pioneer in the art of stage lighting that the first thought that impresses itself upon practical men, is that the stage at large must infallibly adopt the patented devices * by which

^{*} The stage at large has long since done so. My father's death, and the chaotic state in which he left his affairs, left his inventions practically unprotected from exploitations by those desiring to make their own (different) use of them.

Mr. MacKaye so easily controls the mutation of light and atmosphere. Already the Scenitorium has shown the Chicago public that the men who backed Mr. MacKaye in the Spectatorium were not throwing their money after a myth, or an ignis fatuus. Had that project been carried out, the gigantic Columbian Exposition itself might have had a formidable counter-attraction at its very gates."

OF HIS INVENTIONS, HALF HIS "GIGANTIC TWELVE" ALREADY (1894) STOLEN AND EXPLOITED BY OTHERS

This "first thought" that then impressed itself upon practical men—"that the stage at large must infallibly adopt the patented devices by which Mr. MacKaye easily controls the mutation of light and atmosphere"—was indeed prophetic.

"Steele MacKaye," Daniel Frohman has written, in corroboration,*
"was the first man in America to successfully study and develop the
new art of stage lighting. He would have carried this forward successfully to the advantage of all stage productions, had not death intervened.—That remarkable building, The Spectatorium, which he was
unable to complete, would have borne within its walls the inventions
and contrivances in stage illumination which anticipated by many years
the present system."

Even, however, while the walls of "that remarkable building" were being torn down by a wrecking company, and even before death had intervened to lay low its inventor, the human parasites that lie forever in wait to prey on the arduous labours of creative genius, already had begun to help themselves from that wreckage of colossal dreams. Taking advantage of the tangled insolvency of the Columbian Celebration Company, and the strenuous preoccupations and mortal sickness of Steele MacKaye himself, several theatrical producers, and one popular lecturer, who had carefully observed the successful workings of MacKaye's tested models of the Spectatorium (privately shown and publicly exhibited to scores of professional men during '92 and '93) now adopted and exploited for their own commercial purposes-in popular spectacles wholly lacking in MacKaye's idealism, or art-concepts-several of his patented stage inventions, which were then locally known as the "Big Twelve." This was done by these exploiters, with no acknowledgment whatever to MacKaye as their originator. His inventions themselves were thus easily stolen. His own synthetic use of them, however, could not be stolen, nor ever has been approximated to this day.

In contemporary record of this highway robbery on the slopes * Cf. also page ii, 323, footnote.

of Olympus, a vandalage undeterred by any reticence in pilfering from a dying comrade of their own profession, some data have survived in this brief excerpt from the Chicago News (Feb. 9, '94):

"The gigantic Twelve of MacKaye's superior inventions are utilised in his Scenitorium. Of these, however, the wave, cyclone, and astronomical systems have recently all been individually introduced in other stage productions, and the rainbow mechanism, the sun and moon revolutions, were given exhibition at Hooley's, some months ago."

During more than thirty intervening years, there has been almost no voice in journalism to give these matters expression, and no record in theatrical history until the words in this chapter. It is, then, high time they were written.—At that moment (Feb. 9, '94), Steele MacKaye had little more than a fortnight of precarious life, harrowed to the last by unabating poverty.—On February 11th, he wrote to his son Harold (in Pittsburgh):

"My dear Son:—In spite of our premature production, terrible weather, frightful management, and unfortunate location, interest in our production seems now to give some little promise of growth. The presentation is received at each performance with greater enthusiasm. The receipts Friday more than doubled those of Thursday, and those of last night almost doubled those of Friday. The receipts at the Matinée, considering the vile way in which it was advertised, were encouraging. Everybody, last night, seemed to think that the enterprise, within fifteen days, would be an acknowledged winner. . . . I hope so, for all our sakes. As it is, however, the pecuniary situation with me is simply awful. I have not, as yet, been able to get Gross to give me one dollar, but Judge Thoman kindly came to see me to-day, and through him I am now hopeful of getting some, to-morrow or next day."

On the "morrow" (Feb. 12th) he wrote to my mother at Shirley where, still ill herself, she had not been told of his critical illness by my brother, Harold, who had also spared my father the worrying knowledge of her illness:

"Dear Heart—We are having a terrible fight for financial success. Awful weather—location—hard times—and bad management are all against us, and I dare not send any word of encouragement to you yet.

. . . While here, Hal and Helen were a world of comfort and help to me. Hal showed himself a man of signal ability in all he undertook.—I miss him fearfully, but hope soon to see him again for a day or two.

. . . I shall write you soon, on coming prospects—and shall send you money the moment I get any, which I fear will not be for some weeks.

I am living on credit now and, but for my good friend, Bemis, I would be starving in the streets. I do not know what may happen—and I must prepare for the worst. . . . I hope you are all getting on well, in spite of all our troubles.—God bless each and every one of you!

—S. M."

"ANOTHER WORLD VERY NEAR TO ALL OF US"; LAST PUBLIC APPEARANCE, FEB. 10

One more letter to my mother, of the unnumbered written by him during their many years of mutual devotion, expresses his keenly sensitised sympathy for the sufferings involved for her also in his dauntless battle to the end:

"Dearest and noblest woman in the world:—I am striving to give my life to all of you in a substantial form. I hope and believe the end will justify me—but, if it does not in this world, it must in another that is very near to all of us.—I scarcely comprehend myself or the strange enigma of my life. But every hour forces me to realise a fight in life which, thank God, you all will never know, or dream of, if I can help it.—Patience! Every fibre of my own being responds to yours. Your pain is agony to me. But I am trying to fight my fight—waiting for light—yet full of love I cannot express and pity that only angels can understand.

"How long strength of mind and body will last for this work none can tell. If I could earn enough to redeem my darlings from dependence here, I would trust to the hereafter to indicate the love I hesitate to even hint on earth. Of one thing you may be sure; the holiest, the most revered, the eternally precious of women to me—is the noble mother of my children. . . . God help us all—and in mercy keep my strength, at least, for the service of my infinitely precious trusts. Once more be patient and brave. Trust God as I do. He is the only hope of souls that suffer, as does your Husband.—With love and benedictions too deep for words.—S. M." *

The events of the last fortnight of his life moved swiftly to their strangely dramatic conclusion.—This item in the Chicago Tribune records his first absence from the performance of *The World Finder:*

"In Mr. MacKaye's unavoidable absence, last Monday evening (Feb. 12), the performance at the MacKaye Scenitorium seemed doomed to suffer a postponement, and the defection of the musical director, Mr. Fredk. Archer, added to the difficulties. To take Mr. MacKaye's place, Mr. Leonard Wales was called upon, at a moment's notice; and a member of the chorus, Mr. Wade, was pressed into service as musical

^{*} And of him, at this time, my mother has written me:—"Shortly before he died, your father wrote to me in a letter: 'I shall fight the darkness until I die: then I believe all will be light."

director. . . . The audiences at the Scenitorium are large and are steadily increasing. It is likely Mr. MacKaye will achieve a measure of his anticipated popular success."

On the following evening, Tuesday, Feb. 13, '94, his last public appearance occurred on the stage of his Scenitorium, as "lecturer,"—nearly twenty-three years after his first professional appearance, also as lecturer, at his brilliant début in Boston, March 21, 1871.*—This "last night" of his public career was thus recorded by the Chicago Inter-Ocean (Feb. 15):

"Since the opening of the Scenitorium, Steele MacKaye has insisted on appearing at each performance, and those who have seen his pinched and pallid features bent over the Mss. of his lecture, or seen him half carried to and from his cab, each evening, have expressed wonder at the spiritual force which overcame such manifest infirmities.—On account of the terrible storm on Monday night, Mr. MacKaye acceded, for the first time, to the commands of his physicians and remained in bed.—On Tuesday night, however, although plainly on the verge of a collapse, he insisted on taking his usual part in the performance. He returned to the Richelieu unable to stand, and the efforts of two physicians were required to keep him alive till morning.—Since that time Mr. MacKaye has lain between life and death, and his physicians declare he must be moved to a milder climate, in order to live."

"INDOMITABLE WILL": "PROFOUND SELF-RESPECT AS "AMERICAN OF AMERICANS"

This final withdrawal of the author from his production now first brought fully to public attention his acutely critical collapse both in health and finances, and called forth expressions of profoundest sympathy, with the swiftly rallying support of devoted friends.—Another Chicago paper commented (Feb. 15):

"The really dangerous illness of Mr. Steele MacKaye has not been a surprise to those who saw the author-inventor, on the first performance of his wonderful production. His shrunken frame bore mute witness to his trials since the failure of his gigantic Spectatorium. . . . It has been hoped, not without reason, that the present success of his Scenitorium, and the tributes paid to his genius, would revive his fluttering spark of life; but the truth now is apparent. His indomitable will held him up until he could, in person, launch his enterprise, but crushing reaction has nearly terminated his life within the last forty-eight hours. . . When his physical and financial condition became known, his friends immediately began a movement toward a benefit, which would enable him to leave Chicago for a warmer climate. Manager H. H. Gross, of the Scenitorium, proffered that building for the benefit; but,

^{*} Cf. pages i, 149, 150.

as the seating capacity is less than a thousand, it was deemed best to secure a larger theatre. In this emergency, Manager Harry Powers, of Hooley's Theatre, kindly volunteered."

At Hooley's Theatre, Chicago, Wilson Barrett, the eminent English actor, was then performing on an American tour. Some five years earlier in New York, when Steele MacKaye was presiding as Vice President, at a dinner to Barrett in the Lambs' Club, the two had first met, on an occasion concerning which Augustus Thomas has recently * written me:

"About 1899, Wilson Barrett was given a dinner at the Club, and talked rather patronisingly of America's need of a National theatre. Everybody was impressed and apologetic except your father, who replied in very stirring tones that we had a national theatre, not of bricks and mortar, but of character and kind, and that it was spread all over the country.—The present national development of the little theatres would seem to indicate considerable vision on his part."

That self-respecting speech, "in very stirring tones," had been spoken by one who, though broadly cosmopolitan in human vision, was none the less integrally grounded in the love and knowledge of his own country, uncompromised by any overseas obeisances of servility or expatriotism.

"Steele MacKaye," wrote the Pittsburgh Dispatch (March 11, '94), "a man of amazing originality and untiring perseverance, was an American of Americans, and so proud of the fact that, had he been less broad, he might have been considered provincial."

WILSON BARRETT OFFERS HENRY ARTHUR JONES' CHATTERTON AS MACKAYE BENEFIT

Those qualities of outspoken self-respect as an American, far from alienating the regard of the distinguished English actor, had won for MacKaye the high esteem of Wilson Barrett, who now was the first to offer his own services on behalf of the stricken American artist, at the benefit performance, in the one-act tragedy of *Chatterton*, by Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman. Concerning this the Inter-Ocean commented (Feb. 15):

"For the benefit at Hooley's Theatre, Mr. Wilson Barrett promptly volunteered to play *Chatterton*, and all other attractions in the city were no less quick to offer their services, when they learned the unhappy news of Mr. MacKaye's condition. A fine bill will, therefore, be given.

^{*} March 29, 1926. Cf. on page ii, 106, reference to this speech by Steele MacKaye in the Lambs' Club "Annals."

. . . Mr. MacKaye was too ill yesterday even to know of the offer, but two of his personal friends, Colonel J. M. Taylor and Curtis Dunham,* took the responsibility of accepting it for him, and will see that he devotes the proceeds according to the directions of his physicians. A benefit to Steele MacKaye deserves a full house."

The news of this gracious offer of Wilson Barrett was brought, a day or two later, to my father, who dictated these words to Barrett himself (Feb. 17), from the Hotel Richelieu:

"I have not had the strength to undertake to express to you my deep and grateful appreciation of your prompt action in my behalf. I hardly know how to do so, now that I am permitted to make the attempt.—That you should, without hesitation, have volunteered to play an Act of Chatterton, involving so much of trouble to yourself and your company, as a fraternal tribute to one who has not as yet had the privilege of a close acquaintance, is a revelation on your part, which ranks you as high as a man as we all have so long ranked you as an artist.

"I hope this effort of my friends will not be in vain, and that I may once again recover strength enough to renew my work in my profession. If that strength ever returns, and it should ever be my good fortune to have an opportunity to show you, in something better than words, my appreciation of your spontaneous fraternity toward me, I can only assure you that the opportunity will be deemed very precious, and that

I shall make the most of it."

WIDE PUBLIC TRIBUTES; WATTERSON AND PULLMAN; PROFESSIONAL MATINEE, SCENITORIUM, FEB. 19

Meantime, the telegraphic despatches concerning his sickness were eliciting far-spread comments of sympathy and tribute from the American public. On that day (Feb. 17) the New York Press wrote:

"The illness of Steele MacKaye calls attention to an absolutely unique American—the most convincing and captivating of men."

From his editorial office of the Courier-Journal in Louisville, Colonel Henry Watterson wrote to him (Feb. 18):

*"While those near him," wrote Curtis Dunham, "were in almost daily anticipation of his death, Steele MacKaye, with mind as active and original as ever, was planning to return to his interrupted literary labours, declaring that he must do something to meet his immediate necessities. Within a month of the grave, he modestly claimed the right to earn his bread.—During brief respite from the torture of his illness, he would analyse different theories regarding dramatic construction and the development of a plot in narrative form. In a play, he urged the importance of action, as manifesting higher gifts than the subtlest analysis of character at the expense of life and movement. In a novel, he considered that mystery should be sustained and deepened to the very last chapter."

"My dear Steele:—I have no reason to doubt that you will hear from Mr. Pullman,* to whom I wrote a most earnest letter.—Be of good cheer, dear boy, and hie away to sun land, where health, strength and a future await you!—Ever your friend, Henry Watterson."

The next day (Monday, Feb. 19th), a professional matinée was given at the Scenitorium, thus recorded (on the 20th) in the Chicago Inter-Ocean, under caption, "Professionally Indorsed":

"A special performance of The World Finder was given in honour of the dramatic profession at Steele MacKaye's Scenitorium yesterday afternoon.—Needless to say, every company playing in the city was well represented and never before has this superb evidence of Steele MacKaye's genius, in creating greater perfection for the drama, received such discerning approbation. Mr. Leonard Wales, who read the Spectatorio lecture, read a letter from Mr. MacKaye, in which the bed-ridden inventor sent his fraternal greetings to the profession, for which he has done so much. . . . On the conclusion of the performance, Mr. Wilson Barrett most beautifully expressed the feelings of the entire assembly toward Mr. MacKaye. He alluded happily to his spectatorio as 'the poetry of mechanism' and feelingly referred to Mr. MacKaye's illness. He suggested that the greetings of all present be sent to Mr. MacKaye, with the profound hope of speedy recovery.

"This speech was gracefully and tenderly seconded by Roland Reed who, in attesting the fraternal feelings among active workers in dramatic art, paid tribute to the English actor's appreciation of the American inventor's genius. Both speeches were touching in the extreme, and both declared the hope that the benefit for Mr. MacKaye would be largely attended, as the occasion warranted.—The audience's sympathy

was shown in long-continued applause."

CATHCART BRINGS POLONIUS' TRIBUTE TO HAMLET; BARRETT IN "CHATTER-TON'S INSPIRED DEATH SCENE" (FEB. 20)

In these final days, the deep cordiality of English professional feeling, which had expressed itself to MacKaye in London, three years before, through the banquets tendered to him there by Henry Irving and Charles Wyndham, was touchingly evidenced in this remembrance of an English player, which harked back to my father's Hamlet success in London, twenty-one years earlier, thus referred to in the press †:

"Steele MacKaye made a high reputation in London as *Hamlet*, surrounded by the strongest company that all England could produce at the Crystal Palace. In his peculiar cast of countenance and oratorical abilities, he was hailed an ideal *Hamlet* by the ablest critics of the day.—By curious coincidence, the stage manager of Wilson Bar-

^{*} Cf. footnote on page ii, 458. † The Sacramento Bee, March 10, 1894.

rett's company, Charles Cathcart, when asked to take charge of the recent benefit which enabled Mr. MacKaye to start on his last journey, responded that he would perform those duties con amore, as his father had acted *Polonius* to Mr. MacKaye's *Hamlet*, in the Crystal Palace performance."

This account of the benefit performance by Wilson Barrett was given in the Chicago Times (Feb. 21, '94), wherein the chorals mentioned were those written by my father and myself:

"The successful benefit for Steele MacKaye, yesterday afternoon, at Hooley's theatre, was of great interest and a decided success. Those who appeared were Wilson Barrett, Ambrose Manning, Maude Jeffries, Alice Gambier, Elsie Chester, Richard Golden, Dorothy Morton, Charles and William Jerome, Helen Dauvray,* Hubert Wilkie, Blanche Walsh, Charles Coote, Bessie Bonehill, William H. Sherwood, Fred Solomon, and Adele Ritchie. . . . The first number was fittingly taken from the MacKaye Scenitorium music: three chorals sung by forty voices, under Frederick Archer's direction.—Then came Chatterton, the one-act tragedy by Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman, the former-author of The Middleman. Messrs. Jones and Herman have taken the same sad closing chapter chosen by Ernest Lacy for his poetic play of Chatterton. Wilson Barrett played Chatterton with abundant art, and he has never done anything better than the death scene, which he inspired with realistic horror. It was a very touching performance. . . . Richard Golden sold at auction three pictures, donated by the painters Moran, A. W. Street and Walter Burridge. Roland Reed, † Curtis Dunham, and a gentleman from the Auditorium, bought the paintings.—Altogether the benefit will net Mr. MacKave over \$1000 a handsome sum, considering yesterday's inclement weather. . . . Roland Reed read a very affecting letter of thanks from Steele MacKave himself, and spoke a few sympathetic words. Warm applause greeted every allusion to Mr. MacKaye."

Throughout his career, my father's professional crises had been attended by many feeling expressions of friendly regard on the part of his fellow players; ‡ but no earlier occasion had ever been so movingly symbolic of imminent tragic reality as the enactment of that death-scene of the poet-genius, "inspired with realistic horror," which concluded a "sad, closing chapter," alike on the stage of mimic art and of mortal life.

^{*} Cf. Helen Dauvray's letter to Steele MacKaye, on page ii, 54.

[†] Roland Reed, accomplished actor, was the father of Florence Reed, the gifted American actress.

[‡] See pages i, 307, 365.

SANTA FÉ R.R. TENDERS MACKAYE "PRESIDENTIAL HONOURS" WITH PRIVATE CAR; FEB. 22, HE LEAVES FOR SAN DIEGO; HIS FAREWELL GREETING

Two days later,* at five in the afternoon of Washington's Birthday, Steele MacKaye—having been carried aboard a special car, of a train bound for San Diego, California,—left Chicago. On Feb. 24th, the Chicago Evening Journal wrote:

"Steele MacKaye departed for San Diego on Thursday. Although the benefit at Hooley's realised \$1000, Mr. MacKaye owed a hotel bill of \$700 at the Richelieu. Of this amount the hotel proprietors waived one half, Herrmann, the magician, raising the remainder.—Mr. MacKaye's lecture will be read at the Scenitorium by Leonard Wales. The performance of The World Finder now lasts just two hours and a half, and is concise and brisk."

The extraordinary auspices of his departure—converting his "cheesecloth" once more to "ermine," such as had been extended to a President of the United States but never before, till then, "to a member of the dramatic profession"—is thus recorded in the New York Times (Feb. 26th, '94):

"On his way to California to seek restored health, Mr. MacKaye left Chicago Thursday last, at 5 o'clock. The Santa Fe road had tendered him a private car, stocked and equipped, with instructions that it was to be sidetracked whenever Mr. MacKaye desired, or his condition required, and on his arrival in California was to be at his service to take him to any part of the state.—This is the first instance of such a courtesy ever being extended to a member of the dramatic profession. In fact, the Santa Fe road did for him exactly what the Pennsylvania road did for President Garfield.—Mr. MacKaye was very much exhausted when he started, but was full of determination to get well. On bidding Mr. Gross good-bye, he said cheerily: 'I'll be back with you in sixty days!'"

Of that undaunted good-bye the Chicago Herald observed:

"When he cheerfully declared he would return in two months, his old Apollo self, MacKaye's friends smiled encouragingly and sighed in secret. They knew that it was only his immortal hope, even in the presence of death."

On the eve of his departure, my father addressed, to the newspapers of Chicago, this farewell greeting: †

† Chicago News Record, Feb. 25, '94.

^{*} During those days, his friend George M. Pullman came personally to see him at his hotel. In his letter to the Chicago Inter-Ocean, Feb. 27, '94, Major Moses P. Handy wrote:—"It was Mr. Pullman who went to the sick bed of the great artist, bade him be of good cheer, and sent his own physician to minister to his wants."

"In leaving Chicago, I feel that I must express my deep appreciation for the almost uniform kindness, courtesy and generosity with which the press of this city has treated my efforts as an artist while here. I take this means of publicly acknowledging my debt, and beg to be permitted to extend to the press of Chicago my heartfelt thanks.—

Steele MacKaye."

COLORADO, FEB. 25—"THE ENCHANTED ISLE": DAWN AND "THE SACRED MOUNTAIN"

So he started for the Great West.

Since early boyhood, when he had listened at his birthplace, near the wild waters of Niagara, to charmed tales of the far Rockies told by the old pioneer huntsman, "Grizzly" Adams, he had longed to set eyes on those legended peaks and had dreamed of releasing his spirit throughout those solitary spaces of America beyond "the Great Divide." But never till now had he set forth on that quest.

Strangely now, as he sped westward, leaping the vast bourne of the Mississippi, the contours of ancestral landscape merged, in his waking dreams, with vistas of his legendary homeland: Scotch heather with Indian prairie, craig and loch of old highland Mac-Aoidh with the uplifting continent of Colorado and lost, snowblue lakes of the Rockies.—Strangely there the atavistic clansmen regathered, with pied kiltie and plaidie, in those cloud-capt canyons of old legend fulfilled. Once more rang the ghostly battle-cries from the Hand-and-Dagger escutcheon—in the race for the goal of life, the Enchanted Isle. Lit by death lightnings, for one vivid instant, the commonplace of transient realism was transfigured by the ancient reality of racial lineage.

In that revealment, MacKaye—the penniless artist, sleepless and emaciate shadow of his old princely vigour, carried dying in a cab from a Chicago hotel, to be lifted aboard a private Pullman and borne off in an affluent car of victory; MacKaye—speeding to his end, in that flash of finale restored to the youth of a pristine captaincy,—rose up there once more as MacAoidh, the chieftain, in the prow of his racing ship, hearing once again in his ears the spirit-shouts of his clan. . . . The "hissing shoals" were now far behind him—silent. Already long ago it seemed, in that last instant, he had seized, manu forti, his dirk of bright steel, struck off his own left hand, and flung it quivering to the shore—touching there first for his clan the Isle of Enchantment.

What was that Isle of Enchantment?—Who were his clan? On the morning of Sunday, February 25th, keen with mountain cold, at twenty below zero, a telegraph despatch to The Express, of his birth-town, Buffalo, wired:

"About four o'clock this morning, as the train was passing through Colorado, a sudden change in the sick man's condition was noticed. He was awake, but did not seem to be thoroughly conscious of what was going on around him. He rapidly became weaker and continued to lose strength until about seven o'clock. The train was then near Timpas, Colorado."

"Near Timpas—awake" . . . gazing beyond Timpas, through crystalline leagues of dawn—far past the Great Divide—toward New Mexico and ancient Taos: Taos, on whose peak the gods of the pueblos hold their nature mysteries. There, on "the Sacred Mountain," choral rites of sunrise were just beginning.

"Awake": of what then was he "conscious"—not "around him"? What was that ageless "Isle of Enchantment"?—The theatre: the enchanting theatre; the theatre of his Sacred Mountain.

Who were his "clan"?—The fellowship of genius: genius, the unquenchable; genius, whose immortal rites are rekindled forever in the sunrise—forever just beginning.

For these he had dreamed; for these he had worked; for these he had stricken himself "with a brave hand."

"The train was then near Timpas, Colorado.—At 7.45, MacKaye died."

For these—the theatre and genius—he had died.

A few hours later, the private car was returning east, bearing an outworn body—but Steele MacKaye was "gone west"—to the Sacred Mountain.

"FOR LOVE OF—DEATH!—HIS SPIRIT THE BEST IN OUR THEATRE":
GORDON CRAIG

It is honourable to the majesty of art when genius pays homage to genius.—More than a generation later, the outstanding genius of our modern theatre, Gordon Craig, wrote to me:

"Your father—his love of our theatre—not deserting the guns, as so many do—keeping the poor out-of-date things polished up for love of—Death—isn't it?—Something damned near it anyhow! This spirit—your father's—is the best in the American theatre."

The finale of "this strange, eventful history" is brief and moving. In the house of his dreams were held the services of his death.

There the words of his own "Trust Choral" * were sung by unseen voices of The World Finder. There his friend, Roland Reed, the actor who, four years earlier, had stood beside him at the grave of the artist, Matt Morgan: there Elwyn Barron, the critic, who six months before, in MacKaye's "darkest hour" had written brave public words of enlightenment, now spoke with other friends, as these passages from the Chicago Inter-Ocean (Feb. 28th, '94) record:

SCENITORIUM SERVICES—TO "COLUMBUS OF THE NEW WORLD OF ART"

"Fall of the Curtain

"The private car, bearing the body of Steele MacKaye, reached here yesterday morning at 11 o'clock, where it was met by Roland Reed, Elwyn A. Barron, James Barton Key, Joseph Holland, and Louis F. Massen. . . . At 1 o'clock, brief services were held at the Scenitorium, where the pall had been placed before the stage. In tribute were a large laurel wreath from the dramatic and literary professions in Chicago, and a wreath of white roses and lilies-of-the-valley sent by Henry Irving. A large concourse of people was in attendance. Chorals † from The World Finder, were sung by the Scenitorium Chorus.—Professor Swing, who conducted the services, said: . . .

"This form lies here to-day at the bidding of light and shadow. He went without sleep and without food that he might make a sunrise and a sunset for us and our children. . . . He went away in a ship which, 'passing in the night,' sailed to a sunset more wonderful over unknown seas, and will never return."

Roland Reed spoke these words: "Steele MacKaye was a genius by the divine grace of God, if God ever gave genius to man. But, like Galileo, our friend lived in a time when truth found echo in the hearts of men only when its voice was well nigh hushed. . . . Some of us have heard Steele MacKaye narrate in magnificent word-pictures the trials, tortures, triumphs of Columbus, who by courage discovered a new world, yet never held his deserved place until too late; for when eulogies were voiced on earth the angels were singing their welcome to the great discoverer.—So the influence of Steele MacKaye and his great discoveries in the new world of art are winning their acknowledgments of praise, when the life of the dreamer is forever extinguished."

Mr. Elwyn A. Barron said: "More than two years ago, in a foreign city, † as I walked down a hotel corridor to the smoking-room, I heard a great, resonant voice ring out its cheer of health and strength, in that emphasis of tone which comes of self-conscious power. I turned to my friend and said: 'Surely that is the voice of Steele MacKaye.'

^{*} Cf. Appendix.

[†] These chorals (including my father's Trust Choral) had been written by him and myself in our collaboration already cited.

[‡] London, the Victoria Hotel, in the summer of 1891.

So, indeed, it was.—He sat leonine in the midst of an attentive, entertained, but incredulous group, declaiming with the fervour of an enthusiast; his strong face aglow, almost convulsive with the eagerness of speech, the eyes flashing, his giant frame vibrating with the fine passion that animated him.—He was talking of the revolution of stage mechanics, the glorification of dramatic art, through the medium of plans he had perfected. All his listeners were entranced by the marvellous eloquence of the man, but most of them smiled and whispered to one anothed: 'What a splendid visionary!'

"But a few nights ago, a gaunt, emaciated man, impotent to stand without support, powerless to move without assistance, the eyes having something of their old fire, the voice something of its old courageous ring, sat here and told in word, in painting, in music, in a miracle of lights and shadows, the sequel of that fervid, visionary talk in a London smoking-room—opened the doors upon a new world of electrical wonders applied to the service of an art, master of them all,—and, with an open grave among the spectres that he saw, smiled out the triumph of a lifetime. . . . There were cheers and bravos and loud applause in this house, that night, for this one lying here—dead, but a victor; and the echoes of those plaudits shall still be heard when the last one of us has vanished from the scene.

"To those who reckon success by material benefits secured, this man was a failure. But the great success is not the accumulation of wealth. Ignorance, vice, creatures contemptible, may gather golden heaps and mount them as a throne. They who succeed indeed are they who give the world a new idea, a new force, a new aspiration, a new joy, a new hope, that means in any great way the betterment of man.—Somewhere within the roll of servants of mankind this resting toiler's name is written enduringly. His pen was in the service of the higher uses of man's nature. His plays were permeated with the love of truth and the dignity of manhood. His characters were of the kind that stand for heroes in their class, and the lesson of all his dramas was as faithful a presentation of man's moral and personal obligation as if he had been a preacher instead of a dramatist.

"He wrote to me a few letters before the opening of this Scenitorium saying: 'If this should fail, there will be an end at once to my artistic

career and my physical life. All my hope rests there.'

"This was indeed the tomb of the physical man, but it is the cradle of a fame that will grow with the years, as long as dramatic art is cherished on the world's stage."

TO A FELLOW HAMLET

Last and most fitting farewell to one valiant artist of the theatre from another, his friend of many years, was this greeting—inscribed by the hand of Henry Irving, and sent with the flowers of his white wreath of tribute—from a fellow *Hamlet*:





BEYOND



"I shall fight the darkness until I die;
Then I believe all will be light."
Steele Mackaye.

To my Sen and
Connade

Connade

Percy Wallace Mackay,

Stute macifage

With these words (here inscribed in replica of his own hand) my father dedicated the task of our collaboration in The World Finder—before his death. In their spirit I have sought to fulfil his confidence in our abiding comradeship—after.

EPILOGUE

1894 - - - -

"A VACANT LOT-ALL WEEDS: A SILENT DRAMA"



TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE CLOSE OF my father's life, one of the sons of Steele MacKaye wrote to another of his sons a letter.—Here is the letter, written by my brother, Benton, to me (at Cornish, N. H.), on July 26, 1914 (one week before the beginning of the World War), during a brief visit of his to Chicago:

"How I wished you were with me yesterday afternoon when I stood on the site of the Spectatorium! I enclose a sketch

map of the surroundings, copied from notes I made on the ground.

Here is the story.

"I was looking around the city and thought I'd go to Jackson Park. I didn't think it would be possible to locate the Spectatorium site, as it would probably be built up and nobody would know about it. But I went to the northeast corner of the park where, as I remembered, the building stood. There I found the Field Museum, one of the two left-overs from the World's Fair. It certainly looked like an ancient ruin: the plaster was scaled off showing the brick, giving the appearance of antiquity. It had come down through a miniature history from a miniature golden (tho' tragic) age—a relic of '93.

"Well, I saw a policeman on the corner and thought I'd see what he knew. He told me about the Field Museum, and then pointed out where the various State buildings had stood: N. Dakota, Texas, New York, etc. Finally I said, 'I don't suppose you know where the Spectatorium stood?"—His face lightened, as one who was hearing from a somewhat forgotten past.—'Yes, I do!' he replied animatedly. 'It is right over there! (pointing). And that was the greatest thing that was here. If that man had lived, and they had backed him up, that would have been greater than all the rest of the Fair. He had it almost ready. I was there and saw it. I saw the beautiful scenery and all. It was wonderful. But they wouldn't back him up and he died. It was a big disappointment to me.'

"He was a good old Irishman and spoke with the emotion of his race.

-I was nearly all in by this time.

"'You mean Steele MacKaye,' I replied.

" 'Yes.'

"'He was my father."

"'Is that so! Then he let loose. He told me of the way the enterprise was cheated—how workmen went to the Spectatorium, drew their 467 pay-checks, then came across into Jackson Park and put in their work on the Fair Buildings. He unearthed some of the building graft of the Fair, of fortunes made and lost, of attempts made to bribe him, etc.—I didn't ask him his name, tho' he referred to himself as 'Jim.' His number is 146, so we've got track of him. I shook hands with him and followed his directions to the site.

"'You'll see a vacant lot, all weeds, with an oak tree in the corner, and a dump at the other end. That's the place.'—So I went and found it.

"I waded into the weeds—growing breast-high—and walked into the centre of the site. On the beach, a couple of hundred yards away, were thousands of people, hidden partly by a line of trees along 56th Street. But on the vacant land around the site there was no one but an occasional passerby. Everything was silent. I walked across to the edge next the Lake. I could see miles and miles, each way, along the lake 'front,' the huge city fading away in each direction. The 'front' here consists of breakwaters (piling and rock cribs), along which a series of dumps are being made. Eventually, there will be a great parkway all along the Lake.

"It was a perfectly clear day and pretty hot. The Lake was the deepest blue I ever saw." I stood and took it in, and there's where I wished for you. I shall never need to go to Marathon. If ever a great dramatist left behind him a silent drama, it was here. Here was the occur of what would have been the first self-seeing of America—'The Great Discovery.' And here is America to be seen to-day—the water

just as we found it, and the land as we've made it.

"The water remains a big blue highway skirting to the Gods. But the land!—In the foreground, on the beach, occurred a layer of sardined humanity in bathing-suits, having as high an 'output of happiness' as probably the average American ever gets. Here were 'the players.' Over their heads, and miles beyond, stood out the huge steel plants of South Chicago, with their twenty smoke-stacks, each issuing a grim black cloud, that streamed indefinitely across the prairie and closed it from the sun. Here were 'the workers.'—The picture made an exact diagram of play and work and commercialism in America. Here on the beach was our feeble attempt at attaining Heaven; back in the phalanx of smoke-stacks was our titanic triumph in attaining Hell.

"By simple accident the site of the Spectatorium and adjoining lots remain vacant to-day—a total of some fifteen acres, by my guess—a place that would hold thousands of people. It is amazing that land so located should not have been built up, unless it is being held on speculation. This is probably the answer. The policeman thought it would be a great place for a hotel. Some day a municipal parkway will be built all along this lake front. . . . Meanwhile, here lies this little piece of land, quietly strategic, as if asking to be used and consecrated. I don't know what ideas this strange situation may present to you. I don't seem to care, in my present mood, to suggest any particular con-

^{*} Cf. on page ii, 178, S. M.'s description of that blue lake, in a letter to Benton (1888).

crete possibilities. Perhaps there are none. But it occurs to me that all that might be necessary to found, upon Father's 'The Great Discovery,' your American 'drama of democracy,'—is to concentrate upon that stage the dramatic forces it now looks upon."

BIOLOGIC THEME: INHERITANCE: DATA IN RESEARCH FOR TRUTH

The design of this memoir makes relevant certain references to the descendants of Steele MacKaye, as well as to his ancestors. The fact that I am his son must not, therefore, inhibit me, as chronicler, from charting some courses of that exuberant life-force which, in its mysterious currents, constitutes the biologic theme of these annals—from the far origins suggested in the first chapter, onward toward unknown futurities.

In the hour of his death, a cogent summing up of his public career,* written—under the poignancy of his passing—by Nym Crinkle, the New York dramatic critic, who had known him personally from his career's beginning, concludes with these words:

"So ended a prince, a turbulent spirit, a genius, a richly endowed soul, a prolific brain, a stupendous energy, all spent. Like one of those effluent, oriental rivers, that come down from the eternal snows and wind luxuriantly amid palms and plumes, and break dazzlingly into silver jets at every obstacle, this broad stream,—bountifully laden with the gifts of heaven, and richly tuned with the voices of earth,—narrows and lingers, and—with sad silence—sinks into the sand."

So, in the image of that "fountain Arathuse" of which Shelley once sang, this mystic life-stream, vanishing in earthly caverns, seemed indeed lost where all mortality is lost. Yet as long as death secretes immortal suggestions, and while the darkling skeins of biology slowly unravel, and grow gradually luminous beneath the searching eyes of science, so long must the facts of biography, which reveal relationships of personality outlasting personal death, be valid with suggestion to the human research for truth.

As well, then, for those more ultimate aims as for our simple human story as such, it becomes pertinent briefly to record what became of that "cottageful of fledgling MacKayes," for whom his unstinted affection and self-sacrifice influenced (as we have seen) so deeply the works and days of their artist father.† Since his death, over thirty years have passed. Midway of that period, a cursory account of those "fledglings," then long-since-flown their cottage

^{*} In the New York World, Sunday, March 4, 1894—quoted also on earlier pages.

† Cf. his letter to my mother, on page ii, 240.

eaves, was written by Walter Lippman, who—shortly after graduating from Harvard to commence his significant career as critic, author and editor—wrote in *The International*, for January, 1911, the following sketch, entitled, "ALL THE MACKAYES," accompanied by some diverting pen-and-inks of us, standing all in a row:

"The best argument I ever saw for an aristocracy of birth is a family which preaches democracy. The MacKayes—father, mother, four sons and a daughter—have achieved distinction in art or science. They publish books as a matter of course. They are like the families with a

criminal strain in their blood, which sociologists tell about.

"Theirs is a conspiracy to further the happiness of nations. The father was Steele MacKaye, famous as actor-manager and author of Hazel Kirke; the mother dramatised Pride and Prejudice; the oldest son, Harold MacKaye, a patent-lawyer, cannot help being a novelist and sculptor besides; Percy MacKaye is a poet, a playwright, and reformer in the theatre; Benton MacKaye is a forest-engineer, interested in the preservation of our natural resources from predatory moths and men; Hazel MacKaye is an actress; and James MacKaye is the philosopher who makes the whole family activity seem reasonable.—So, if you want to know what they are all about, you must go to James. He will tell you in his Yankee drawl, as he looms above you with his rosy cheeks and his curly brown pompadour,—he will say that the purpose of life is to achieve 'the greatest amount of happiness for all the world.'—You will answer that you approve, of course. That makes him angry.

"'Cannibals approve of cannibalism; the czar approves of the czar; lots of people approve of working other people to death. Whatever

they approve they call right.'

"'But conscience ought to-

"'Yes, you make conscience a guide to right, instead of making logic a guide to right and right a guide to conscience. You will work for the happiness of everybody, if you approve of it—that is, if it doesn't hurt

business,-instead of working for it because it's right.'

"When I heard that, I wanted to ask him a very natural, and a very personal question. Once, when I saw him take five lumps of sugar in his tea, I had the courage.—'Tell me, Mr. MacKaye, do you approve of your own philosophy?'—He smiled, almost sadly.—'No, not of all

of it; but what difference would my approval make?

"The fine sternness of the Puritans came out in that. But on it is built a love of the joy of life. 'The Economy of Happiness,' the rationale of his distinguished magnum opus, working through the rigid precision of scientific method, is a philosophy which finds its ultimate justification in the joy of men, and in the laughter of a child. That is the MacKaye inheritance—plays, novels, poems, acting, scientific research, 'fun, fishing, and philosophy' for all the world—a creative strain, strikingly like the criminal strain. It is in their blood."

A decade and a half later, Walter Pritchard Eaton wrote: *

"One of Percy MacKaye's important works remains to be finished: the life of his father.—Steele MacKaye, inventor, playwright, dreamer, was one of the most interesting figures who ever came into our theatre, and he certainly left behind him an interesting family.—There is Harold, who writes fantastic novels like The Panchronicon; there is Jim, who invents electric ice-boxes and systems of social ethics; there is Percy; there is Benton, who dreamed the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Katahdin, and is already seeing his dream begin to come true; there is Hazel, who devises community pageants: dreamers all, living not by the dollar, but by the imagination, and with imaginations which conceive fine, ideal things.—I don't know of another family quite like this of Steele MacKaye's. I wish I did."

STEELE MACKAYE'S MANY-SIDED HERITAGE; ITS SPECIAL EMPHASES IN HIS SCIONS

Some brief data concerning the MacKaye family are included in the Appendix; and these records suggest how the many-sided heritage of Steele MacKaye has taken on individual emphases in his scions.

Biological inheritance, educational environment: in our case, I think, these old watchwords of human evolution have been, to large extent, fused; in as much as our early environment was largely conditioned by the nature of our inheritance from both sides—a heritage congenitally impelled toward the creative life of dreams; and this impulsion has largely self-selected our environment and education. Deepest of all influences in that education was the overflowing affection and unstinted faith in our creative selves which permeated every motive and decision affecting us, on the part of my father and mother, in their mutual dedication to our lives: an influence (as this memoir has amply suggested) never negative, but always positive toward impersonal goals; never outwardly regulative, nor institutional; always inwardly instigating toward individual growth for social ends. Such influence, contrary to the Quixotic, insatiate hope of my father, has brought us little respite from his own lifelong pursuit by the furies of imminent penury -more bewildering often than its actual certitude: a regimen of experience in "cashless glory" which has served at least to feed the

^{*} In the New York World, March 15, 1925.—A year before this statement, my mother had died (May 14, 1924), and many years earlier (Jan. 22, 1889), my brother Will, actor and artist (cf. Chapter XXIII and Appendix).—A year after this statement, my half-brother, Arthur, who is often mentioned in this memoir, published (1926), his first novel, *The Slave Prince*. Cf. Appendix.

rabid "wolves' heads" of our clan with the saving venison of humour.

"The child is father of the man," says Wordsworth. In one of my boyhood skits on our family (in 1890)—Hap the Second: The Teeles Philosophising—Spencer Ultimate-Nature Teeles (my brother, James, aged 18) is depicted in discourse with Parsee Confusus (myself, aged 15) and Bent-on Agriculture (my brother, Benton, aged 11). During the years since then, my brother James (having graduated from Harvard in 1895) has developed his original philosophical gifts and expressed them in a series of volumes, which have long since firmly established his reputation in the realm of sociology and political science.

THE ECONOMY OF HAPPINESS: "A REVOLUTION IN PHILOSOPHY"

When the *Economy of Happiness*, by James MacKaye, was first published by Little Brown in 1906, it was immediately hailed as a masterly work permanent in its field of economic philosophy. The editor of *The Independent* wrote of it:

"By its style and scope, The Economy of Happiness challenges comparison with the works of such masters of philosophy and political science as John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. Expounding an original theory of human society and advocating radical methods for its future development, the book is distinguished by its thorough analysis of the factors involved. Amid the flood of social literature, this large and comprehensive work has surprised the students of social science."

Prof. Franklin H. Giddings of Columbia University wrote in a long critique of it:

"Mr. MacKaye's plan for the abolition of poverty is nothing less than a very great invention. It adds something that was lacking in the older schemes of socialism, but absolutely necessary. It provides for a continuing transformation and improvement. Mr. MacKaye's 'pantocracy' is dynamic to a degree. Like all great inventions, his plan is so simple, that every one will say: 'Why did nobody think of this before?' . . . It is perfectly sound. We predict that the orthodox political economists, if they try to invalidate Mr. MacKaye's reasoning, will give up the attempt as hopeless."

"The book (wrote the editor of the Arena) is a revolution in philosophy. Profound and consistent, Mr. MacKaye lays broad the foundations of his argument upon the nether springs of logic."

"A great and enduring work (wrote the Providence Journal), The Economy of Happiness should be disseminated as widely as possible. For Mr. MacKaye not only teaches the principles of morality in the

abstract; he formulates scientific rules for translating them into the domestic, social, business and political life of the people."

The work, in its scope of creative imagination, makes appeal alike to scientists and to social-minded poets. I recall vividly the zest with which my poet-dramatist friend, William Vaughn Moody, told me that he was deep in his second reading of its many-hundred closely reasoned pages.

In his later volumes, The Politics of Utility, The Happiness of Nations, Americanised Socialism and The Logic of Conduct, James MacKaye has further elaborated his own social philosophy, phases of which he has lectured upon at Harvard, and has since been engaged in teaching at Dartmouth College, in the department of philosophy, while completing there another comprehensive volume.

ACTING; NOVEL-WRITING; COMMUNITY DIRECTORSHIP

According to their ages, the children of my father and mother grouped themselves naturally in three pairs,* known to the family in our childhood as the "big boys," the "middle-sizers," and the "infants." Of the eldest pair ("Hal" and Will), Will was the younger, whose too brief career, as actor and artist, outlined in this memoir, may be traced through his name in the Index.

Perhaps in none of my father's children have his varied capacities been focussed more than in his son, Harold, whose brilliantly versatile gifts have taken on less public forms of expression, owing to the early pursuit of his exacting labors as a patent attorney. Outside of that chosen profession, his career has expressed itself in the field of letters chiefly through the fantasy and humour of his novel-writing, as touched upon in records of the Appendix.

The youngest pair of MacKaye "cottage fledglings" at Shirley were Benton and Hazel, whose child photographs in the play-rôles of Mr. Hobbs and Little Lord Fauntleroy are here included.* That early gift for acting my sister, Hazel, has since practised professionally, under the managements of Winthrop Ames, Henry Miller, Harrison Grey Fiske, and in several plays of mine. She has also assisted me in the directorship of some of my masques, and created others of her own, during her significantly expert career in art-phases of the Woman's Movement in America, as detailed further in the Appendix.

REGIONAL PLANNING: THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL: ITS "ARTIST-ENGINEER"

In January of 1891, I recall my brother Benton, at the age of * Cf. their photographs among illustrations in Chapter XXIII ("Elegy").

twelve, reading aloud to some of the family the Constitution of his "Cosmopolitan Organisation": a world-scheme for the abolition of all national barriers and prejudices. In his after-career (since his R.M. degree in Forestry, at Harvard) during constructive planning in government conservation of our natural resources and in editorial writings, Benton MacKaye has developed from his boyish thoughts on "Agriculture" and "Cosmopolitanism" a comprehensive philosophy of Land Use in its natural and human ramifications, conceived as a problem of super-engineering—his "New Exploration," some aspects of which he has glimpsed in articles by him published in the Survey, the Nation, and other journals.

These glimpses, however, give but partial hint of the larger synthesis already maturing towards a magnum opus of his own, based in many years' expert labours as a forest engineer, during which his applied ideas have anonymously shaped adopted policies of the national government over great areas of our country, and—like his father's dynamic visions, before him,—have originated and leavened several important movements which do not bear his name.

One such dream, however, of his design and charting (alluded to above by Walter Pritchard Eaton) is already permanently identified with his name and work, and hails him "father" of the "Great Appalachian Trail." * This conception is itself but one phase of a new imaginative vocation, of which Benton MacKaye was a creative initiator: the expert profession which has come to be known as Regional Planning. To Benton's leadership in that movement Lewis Mumford has referred specificly in his new volume, The Golden Day, which George Santayana has recently termed "the best book about America if not the best American book that I have ever read"; which John Macy has called "an acute, profound analysis of the American mind and the conditions under which it has developed"; and Van Wyck Brooks "the culmination of the whole critical movement in this country during the last ten years." Referring further to my brother's innovating work and vision, Lewis Mumford has written for this Epilogue, in February, 1927:

"Benton MacKaye is the pioneer of the regional planning movement in America; he has brought to that movement a unique combination of the engineer and the artist; and, more than any other single person I can think of, he has provided it with its vision of a renovated framework of modern society. In his abstemious life, in his rigorous concen-

^{*} First set forth by him in *The Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, October, 1921, in an article entitled: "An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning," by Benton MacKaye.

tration on thought, he reminds one of Thoreau; and out of his contact as a forester with the wilderness and the high mountain outlooks, he has returned to the valley-cities with the prospectus for a finer civilization, based upon a more careful utilization of resources, upon a more exact correlation of industries, and upon a more complete social life than is provided the civilization which now fares so prosperously—on paper. The molds that Benton MacKaye has projected are not spun out of his inner consciousness; they are grounded on an exact and comprehensive knowledge of nature and industry. The engineer in him tests the artist; and the artist urges on the engineer. His plan for the Appalachian Trail is one of the fine imaginative works of our generation; and the series of private studies and reports he has made upon various aspects of regional planning, in attempts to create a setting for the good life by directing the forces which now confuse and obstruct our human purposes—are outstanding examples of fundamental social research in a new pattern. It will take a little while, perhaps, for Benton MacKayes' ideas to spread; but they are deeply rooted, and I have no doubt that those roots will send up nourishment for many a long year. I am proud to live in an age and a region that can still produce a Benton MacKaye."

"FOCUSSING THE PEOPLE'S VISION"

Distinguishing the functions of his own profession as related to that our father, Benton has written:

"Steele MacKaye, as dramatist, was a visualiser. I see three types of visualisers. One is the statesman. Lincoln said that this country could not continue half slave and half free; and in that one short sentence of prophecy, he made two visualisations of America—a slave America and a free America. Another type of visualiser is the regional planner. He visualises chiefly by maps, charts and scientific statement. Then there is the dramatist who visualises through the medium of synthetic art.

"In Steele MacKaye were the elements of all three. He was perhaps a forerunner of what might be called the 'statesman-dramatist.' He was not interested in writing a play which did not image social forces. He made these forces stand forth—as do wind and rain and sunlight. His Paul Kauvar set forth the cyclone of the French Revolution. His Drama of Civilisation set forth, in the Indian brave and in the cowpuncher, the racial forces contending for a continent. His World Finder (with the super-stage technique of his Spectatorium) visualised the greatest of the Earth's human migrations.

"Can prophecy be dramatised as well as retrospect? That is what interests the regional planner, who is concerned with equipping regions for future human living. I believe that prophecy can be dramatised. I believe that my father thought it could be; that he was a pioneer in seeing the theatre (and all dramatic activity) as a sort of focusing lens,—a telescope, whereby the public mind can look into perspective, and

be enabled to vision, not alone the actuality of the past, but the potentiality of the future. Such, to my mind, is the aim of the visualiser—whether statesman, regional-planner, or dramatist: to focus the people's vision."

As a dramatist, my own creative work—on the larger communal scale—has been concerned with that "focus." By its nature, its projection through arts of the theatre has involved a limelight of publicity more intense (though not always more illuminating) than the light thrown on the special labours of my brothers, with which my own are none the less closely allied. For my concept of the theatre's art, and my labours to embody it, though related to some aspects of Broadway, are rooted in an "Economy of Happiness," and in imagined uses of national and international resources, wholly kindred to the basic concepts of James and Benton MacKaye.

"VARIED MUTATIONS"; DEATH—AND REBIRTH; THE OVERMASTERING WILL

So, with varied mutations and new forms of fruition, our several life-works have sprung from that fecund creative force which this memoir has imaged in its main current—the Spirit of Steele Mac-Kaye, confluent there with our mother's, merged from sources of old New England and Scotland. Some of these sources I have traced in the Prologue of this work, to the inherent design of which—the illumination of a biologic "idea"—it is now pertinent for this Epilogue to touch briefly upon a few specific extensions of my father's art-life through my own, in respect to the theatre.

When my father died, I came from college in Cambridge to New York, to attend there the services of his funeral in the church of his boyhood, All Souls Unitarian Church, on Twentieth Street, near Gramercy Park. From Chicago, after the touching memorials in the Scenitorium, the eastward journey had been attended by special railway courtesies, ordered by Chauncey M. Depew.* At the church the services (on March second) were conducted by Rev.

^{* (}N. Y. Advertiser, March 2, '94): "The body of the late Steele MacKaye arrived in New York last night, having been brought from Chicago in a special car placed at his friend's disposal by President Chauncey M. Depew of the New York Central Road."

The eight pallbearers at the New York services were MacKaye's old friends, J. Q. A. Ward, William Forse Scott, Ralph Meeker, Dr. Gustavus Winston, Dr. Edward Bradley, Frank B. Carpenter, Dr. Vincent Zolnowski, and William E. Payson. The burial was at Woodlawn. His permanent simple memorial, however, with that of his family, is planned for the little "Stoke Poges" churchyard, by the old Common, at Shirley Center, Mass.









SAINT LOUIS MASQUE (1914) BY PERCY MACKAYE: 8000 ACTORS

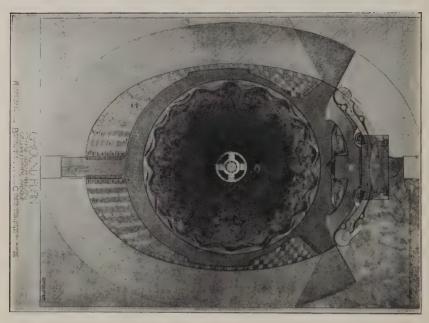
I. Photo, by day: showing Audience (of 200,000), Stage (water arc and 800-foot wood structure), Dressing Tents for Actors (right and left), with Forest Park, St. Louis, in distance; statue of Saint Louis in foreground.

II. Pastel Sketch: Night Impression of Masque Illumination. (cf. p. ii, ciii.)
III. Mayan Costume: Design, by Joseph Lindon Smith, for "The Dream of Caho-

kia" (Prologue of the Masque). (cf. pp. ii, 479-480.)

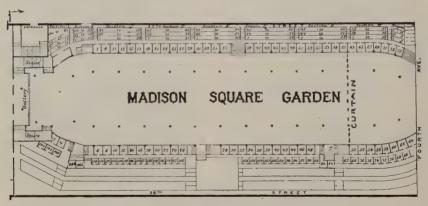
IV. Cahokia, the Masque "Super-Puppet": Photo, by daylight, head and torso (showing MacKaye, at left, during rehearsal). (pp. 478-479, footnotes.)

The Masque Music was composed by Prof. F. S. Converse, of Harvard.



GROUND PLAN OF CALIBAN

Masque by Percy MacKaye, New York, City College Stadium, 1916. (cf. p. ii, 480.)



GROUND PLAN OF THE DRAMA OF CIVILISATION

Pageant-Drama, by Steele MacKaye, New York, 1886. (cf. pp. ii, 78, 84.)

Theodore C. Williams and by Rev. William R. Alger, my father's pupil and friend of many years.

On that black day, following close behind the frail form of my mother in her long black weeds, the organ music insufferably transmuting all life into anguish, as we passed outward, I recall forever the shock of the glare daylight and the pall of a new responsibility, which has never wholly lifted since that hour: the overmastering sense that some day, somehow, by some grace of consummation, I must bring him back—vividly back again to the world of breath and light his brave charm had lived to inspire and vivify.

Thirty-two years is itself a lifetime, yet it has taken me that time to focus the records of his life. Even now, how may I know whether words have breath and life to re-embody him? Yet as none of us who live shall ever be born again here, except through words pregnant with desire, perhaps—because of desire long pent—this memoir may not have failed of its living issue. At least, there is no other way of consciousness.

SUBCONSCIOUS EXTENSIONS OF CREATIVE LIFE; A GROWING PHILOSOPHY OF THE THEATRE'S ART AND ITS REVOLUTIONARY TECHNIQUE

Subconsciously perhaps, however, the imbuing spirit of Steele MacKaye may have wrought several significant extensions of his creative life through my own. These parallelisms, at times, have been striking; yet, though their inhering resemblances are strong, their differences are equally so. In comparing some soon to be cited, it would, therefore, be jumping superficially to a wrong conclusion to identify, as essentially one, either the inward patterns or the outward influences of our dual (though allied), distinctive contributions to the theatre's art.

After my father's death, leaving his records and affairs in a chaos of debt and tragedy, there appeared to be a definitive fall of the curtain upon his life work and its material influences in behalf of his family. In those days, plays in America were not published, as now, for readers.* During his lifetime, my father—though the author of some twenty stage productions, and the teacher of his own formulations of philosophy to hundreds of pupils—published nothing, except a few articles. His death, therefore, cut off all but his personal memory.

^{*} In America, my own first published play, written for E. H. Sothern, *The Canterbury Pilgrims* (Macmillan, 1903), was the first professional stage-contribution of a native poet issued for the regular book trade.

With my brothers, I worked my way through Harvard, delivering, in 1897, the first commencement part on a theme of modern drama till then ever given at an American college. My first achieved stage production (after fifteen years of apprenticeship) was Jeanne d'Arc, produced by Sothern and Marlowe, in 1906. Before that, and from then on, amid ever-continuing stage productions, I also toured the country many times (as my father had done before me), expressing in public addresses, from Massachusetts to California, largely before universities, my own growing philosophy of the theatre, conceived in its desirable emancipation from Broadway commercialism (through which none the less I was ever actually working and experimenting), dedicated to a new scope of democratic participation in art, implying a wholly revolutionary technique and motivation.

LECTURES-1905-'12: THE CIVIC THEATRE AND THE REDEMPTION OF LEISURE

These ideas propounded—amongst other aims and functions of a national "Civic Theatre" *—a correlation of "little theatres," "university theatres" and "stadium theatres," none of them then existent. The ideas seemed at the time a little mad to some in my audiences, though they are now widely accepted and not a little of their substance has since then been partially fulfilled. A portion of my addresses were published, in two volumes, The Playhouse and the Play (Macmillan, 1909), and The Civic Theatre, in Relation to the Redemption of Leisure (Kennerley, 1912). During the next decade, some of their inhering principles were put by me imaginatively into practice in some seven or eight "dramas of democracy," or communal plays, which—for lack of better terminology—I entitled "Masques": †

* This term of Civic Theatre, since then variously applied, was first devised

and used by me in The Playhouse and the Play, 1909.

[†] These have no essential relationship to the historic "masques" or "pageants" of England. Though my name is identified with the American movement of "Pageantry" which I did a good deal to initiate, I have never devised a "pageant" in the English sense. All my works in the "community" field are radically different in technique, being focally designed for the theatre—of a kind largely yet to be actualised in the future. . . . Thus at Saint Louis, in 1913-'14, the vast-scale outdoor theatre problems which led me to utilise there, in my masque, for the first time in America, a super-puppet, Cahokia (worked by inner mechanism controlled by two men within the puppet), led me further at that time to originate (though not then to use) the Group Person, which later I developed and partially tested in productions of The Will of Song (1919). . . . At New York and at Cambridge, in 1916-'17, in Caliban, I carried out some ideas advocated in my Civic Theatre (1912) by reviving the use of the facial mask for the actors (both for speech and panto-

Midway of this Storm and Stress Period of helping to replough and replant a western world, it was stimulating to encounter, en tour, the following warm-hearted greeting of fellowship in a common cause, sent from overseas by one whose nobly imagined works on the Art of the Theatre I had been privileged to welcome, with pen and voice, in America. In the Indianapolis News (Feb. 13, 1915), Oliver Sayler, then dramatic critic of that journal, printed these words from Edward Gordon Craig: "I hold Percy MacKaye very high in my regard, and I feel very strongly that every man, woman, society, or league, interested in the progress of the theatre, should range themselves round his banner and acknowledge him as America's leader in this new movement. His experience is wide, and he has also inherited great talents from his father,—one of the few theatre men of that day who were ahead of their times."

MASQUES: $SAINT\ LOUIS$ —CALIBAN—"THE WRAITH OF THE SPECTATORIUM"

This much of retrospect is suggestive of some vital factors, in two of my masques,* related to certain theatric aims and social motives which imbued the Spectatorium concepts of my father in the last year of his life. The works in question were my masques of



Stage of Masque of Saint Louis: drawing by Joseph Lindon Smith

Saint Louis (in 1914) and Caliban (at the New York City College Stadium, 1916, and Harvard Stadium, 1917).

mime), not only in its archaic forms (as in the Roman comedy Interlude), but in what I termed its concealing and revealing usages for modern theatre symbolism (as in the masks of Death, Lust War, sensitively carried out by Robert Edmond Jones. Cf. half-tone illustrations in Epilogue. For a pendrawing, by Jones, of Henry V "vision" in Harvard Stadium, 40-foot plaster

light-dome, cf. page 481).

* The synthetic technique interrelating all of my produced masques, and several others unproduced, embodying some twenty years of inventing and experimenting in communal forms of the theatre's art, though it lies clearly formulated in my thought and partly sketched in manuscript notes, has never been expressed by myself, or by others, in published form. To do so comprehensively (chronicling and clarifying its full record and import, historical and potential), would require an extensive labor. Possibly, if the exigencies of my life permit, I may some day undertake the task, which perhaps might contribute some inventions of permanent use to the harmonic expression of our evolving social organism.

At Saint Louis, where some eight to ten thousand actors took part, and a total of half a million spectators witnessed the five performances, a theme which I conceived for my masque was a "League of Cities" in behalf of communal dramatic art. Delegates to this League, officially appointed by the Mayors of the chief cities in America, Canada and Mexico, took part in the masque by night, and by day attended a three-days' conference (recorded in a published volume), at which delegates as representative as Hamlin Garland and Lorado Taft from Chicago, Prof. Thomas H. Dickinson from Madison, Wisconsin, and Prof. George Pierce Baker, from Cambridge, Mass., discussed the pertinent issues.

At New York, for the Tercentenary of Shakespeare's death, the Mayor's committee of leading citizens, with Mr. Otto H. Kahn, as chairman, conjoined with hundreds of societies, provided municipal auspices for a production of my masque, *Caliban*, in which eminent professionals, headed by Mr. John Drew, in the rôle of Shakespeare, acted for the first time with two thousand community participants.—A year later, at the Harvard Stadium, under auspices

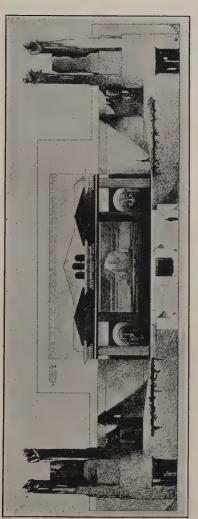


of the Governor of Massachusetts, the Mayor of Boston, and the Red Cross, five thousand citizens from nineteen sections of Greater Boston took part in the same masque for three weeks, publishing their own Caliban newspaper for their city-of-actors behind the scenes. A "vis-

ion" scene in the 40-foot plaster light-dome, there used, is here sketched by Robert Edmond Jones.

An impression of these masques may perhaps be best briefly compassed by a few quotations of record. Some of these convey expressions of generous compliment in part to my own work, but they are not quoted for that personal graciousness. They are quoted impersonally for their bearing upon an immortal urgency sprung from Steele MacKaye, because I know of no other way to record the sincerity of their tributes to him, except by including their references to his son.—On my fiftieth birthday (March 16, 1925), Vachel Lindsay wrote in greeting of that occasion:

"I say, America is beginning to dream and is not afraid to dream. I say, we are now moving toward the grand style, in all things—from sky scrapers to National Parks; and, back of all this, can be found





DESIGNS FOR CALIBAN, Shakespeare Tercentenary Masque, by Percy MacKaye: produced by him at City College Stadium, New York, 1916; with Revival of Masks for Modern Theatre-Art:

I. Stage for the Masque Proper: (Orchestra and Chorus concealed above Stage): Design by Joseph Urban. II. "Inner Scene": "Yision of Ghost in 'Hamlet'": Design by Robert Edmond Jones. III. Masks of War, Lust, Death: Designs by (cf. pp. 478-479, footnotes; and 480-482). MacKaye and Jones.



STAGE OF MASQUE, with 40-foot Plaster Dome (for Vision Scenes and Acoustics), Wings (for concealed Choruses and Orchestra), Ramps and "Yellow Sands" Circle (for Group Action).—Photo—Cambridge, in distance.
ROMAN COMEDY INTERLUDE: Hercules and the Sphinx.
Photograph of Hercules (with mask and lion's skin), at Rehearsal.





(Poster: from photograph at rehearsal of English Interlude, cf. p. ii, 480.)

CALIBAN: HARVARD STADIUM, CAMBRIDGE, 1917

Masque by Percy MacKaye: 5000 Actors, from 19 Sections of Greater Boston, for 3 weeks.—In the Greek Interlude, the author enacted Sophocles; in the English, his children—Keith, Arvia (as assistants) and Christy MacKaye—took part. Artists associated with the production were Lionel Braham (Caliban), Howard Kyle (Prospero), Gareth Hughes (Ariel), Alexandra Carlysle (Miranda: enacted in New York, 1916, by Edith Wynne Matthison); Arthur Farwell (Composer), Arthur Shepard (Music Director), R. E. Jones, Frederick Stanhope, Irving Pichel, Hazel MacKaye, Percy Jewett Burrell, Samuel Eliot, Jr.

poets who were willing to break their young hearts in secret, thirty years ago . . . I sat with Sara Teasdale and saw the great Saint Louis Masque, in the Spring of 1914, in the municipal park beneath the great bronze statue of Saint Louis. Hundreds of thousands of people witnessed the spectacle, and the town was shaken to its foundations with new dreams and visions and hopes. The thing was not only on a theoretically gigantic scale, but it went deep into the imaginations of the citizens; and the whole spirit of the occasion was such that no one there dared call himself a mere business man again. Every one became a dreamer, one not ashamed to be a poet for his city, and all this because of the fiery spirit of Percy MacKaye, who—like his father before him —knew how to turn men of clay into archangels for a day."

On that Saint Louis occasion, during the second performance of the masque, there was handed to me this gracious note from one whom I had not then met, the New York artist, Frederick Stymetz Lamb, then President of the Architecture League of America:

Saint Louis: Friday, May 29, 1914.

"My dear Mr. MacKaye: To say what is in my heart may lay me open to a charge of invading the sacred privacies of your filial affections.

—I will take the risk, just because I am most desirous that you should know how deeply one Brother Man appreciates the courage, loyalty and virile artistic workmanship, with which you have laboured to bring to glorious fruition the noble dream of the ever-to-be-lamented artist: Steele MacKaye, whom I knew and adored in the Chicago of Ferdinand and Isabella!—The wraith of the 'Spectatorium,' reincarnated in the glory of Steele MacKaye's dream of 1893, is become the immortality of the Saint Louis Masque of 1914. Your faith is victorious!—A vous. Lamb."

Of the production of Caliban * at New York, these are some impressions, published in reviews at the time:

"Nothing so magnificent has ever been shown in this country as MacKaye's Masque, Caliban. For the first time in the history of the arts of the theatre, it is America that has evolved a new dramatic form: a pageant drama that revolutionises the theatre and dramatic art in many of its aspects. . . . We have seen the colorful dance-drama of the Russian ballet, the Greek classics revived newly outdoors by Granville Barker, the Isadora Duncan Dionysian festival indoors, the wonderful art of Joseph Urban—all the brilliant achievements of the new workers in the theatre; but last night, for the first time, an audience saw a co-ordination of all these forces—combining all that is best in the work of these creators of beauty. . . . It was a true history of the arts of the theatre, employing all those arts in their most improved

^{*} Concerning some extensions of Steele MacKaye's creative influence, through Caliban, to some of his grandchildren, see last pages of Appendix.

forms; yet the masque had a form and method all its own. That is why Caliban is unique; and that is why its creator, MacKaye, stands to-day as the foremost worker in the American theatre, a man who must be reckoned with henceforth in recording the evolution of the theatre's art." (Brooklyn Eagle.)

"To the stadiums and the parks of our democracy, Caliban should introduce a form of entertainment equalling in popularity and surpassing in beauty and wholesomeness the vast spectacles of the Roman Coliseum." (Ernest Hamlin Abbott, in The Outlook.) . . . "That this vast shrine of athletic sports should have been rendered inadequate not by football but by the production of drama and pageantry is a curious outcome." (N. Y. World.) . . . In this production, a civic event of almost unexampled magnitude, Mr. MacKave has succeeded in achieving the apparently impossible." (Clayton Hamilton, in Vogue.) . . . "There is a blinding glory in the very conception of MacKaye's magnificent masque, Caliban,—a structure of music, light, dance, acting, song, scenic values, pantomime: the whole builded into a monument of dramatic art that lifts as the apex of its upward-pushing pyramid—the 'spoken word.'" (Review of Reviews.) . . . It ranks in the field of spirit with the epoch-making inventions in the field of material things. MacKaye has linked the pageant ambition with an ambition no less than Hellenic-in the mood of Plato and Sophocles." (John Collier, in The Survey.) . . . "There is now no longer any question that Mr.. MacKaye's conception of community art is established in America." (The New Republic.)

These foregoing impressions are here quoted for the sake of this one to follow, written (in the Chicago Herald) by one who, among the hundreds of thousands that witnessed my masque, perhaps alone had also witnessed the Scenitorio of my father, as whose personal pupil in the theatre's art, as well as leading actor in one of my own plays, Henry E. Dixey wrote these words of old and new recollection:

"Out there in the starlight of the Stadium, under the open sky, in the ampitheatre black with people, the great arc lights flashing on the three stages of the masque, as community group after community group passed in review—the Pan Hellenic League, the East Side Settlements, the Greenwich Villagers, the Bronx District, the schools, the representatives of all the races, classes, conditions in the great city—I saw the benignant ghost of Steele MacKaye looking down on his dream come true through his son."

GENIUS AND DEMOS; "STEELE MACKAYE AND THE FATA MORGANA'S PALACES"

The brevity of our life—the evanescent beauty of dreams—the only surviving monument of all: Imagination—these are borne in

upon me here, almost too poignantly, as fleeting chronicler of these many actors of times past, knowing well how pale an impress the hand, that writes these last pages of a long-dreamed Epoch, can leave—of all their charmed life—on the "yellow sands" of history. So the foregoing glimpses of my masque for Shakespeare's Tercentenary lead me back to the imagined moments of its ending—a groping toward futurity, wherein all human aspiration takes on the semblance of Caliban himself—yearning toward light:

"When these pageants of Time have passed, and the stately Spirit of Time has vanished in dark on the Yellow Sands, the only light remains on the figure of Prospero. . . . Then, out of the dimness, comes forth Caliban. Groping, dazed, he reaches his arms toward the dark circle. In a voice hoarse with feeling, he speaks aloud:

"Spirit of the Yellow Sands! O Life! O Time!
Thy tempest blindeth me: thy beauty baffleth.—
A little have I crawled, a little only
Out of mine ancient cave. . . .
Yet—yet I yearn to build, to be thine Artist
And 'stablish this thine Earth among the stars—
Beautiful! . . . O bright beings, help me still!
More visions—visions, Master!"

The only immortal hope of Caliban is his arch-enemy and saviour, Prospero. If groping Aspiration ask for vision, it must ask it of Genius. If there be any utility in the mob-yearnings of Demos after a soul, it will be in his "Great Discovery" of a faith in the Aristocrat potential in his own passional being—the austere Artist of Democracy. And if there were ever an artist of our own potential democracy, tested in the austere fires of courage and validated by the vision of genius, this record has surely revealed him as the protagonist of its central theme: an ideal Theatre of Democracy above and beyond our sordid actuality.—On my father's death, a spokesman out of the vast American west where he died, wrote in an editorial of the Lincoln, Nebraska, Journal:

"About the horizons of Steele MacKaye the Fata Morgana's palaces were always rising, changing, coloured by every hope, clouded by every sorrow. His imagination was his curse. Pained by what other men were callous over, delighted by joys others were impervious to, he made his whole life a vision. . . . That the ideal shall be real to him, Emerson says, is the poet's consummation and crown. Perhaps; but sometimes the crown is very thorny, and the consummation is only consummate misery.—If one wishes to live in brown-stone and be buried under

marble, it is well to choose to see only the truths all men see, or to believe the lies all men believe.—Steele MacKaye chose otherwise."

Because Steele MacKaye chose otherwise, he shall be remembered when all the brown-stone of his epoch shall have crumbled into "yellow sands": remembered in honour as undaunted pioneer of a new faith—the dawning faith of our futurity—faith in the consecrated leadership of Genius, whose touchstone is creative art. His own utterance of that faith, which he cried in his youth through an American wilderness, and breathed always from his exhorting heart and lips, still speaks in these words of his:

"ART-THE DANGEROUS AND TERRIBLE-ALWAYS GETS WHAT IT ASKS"

"Art is the most effective prayer of man—a prayer that is sure to bring a response from Providence—it always gets what it asks. It is the most dangerous and terrible mode of appealing to the awful Power which vivifies the human heart and sways its destinies. . . . When the art of a people is degraded—their decadence is near at hand; when it is progressively elevated—their salvation and glory are certain. . . Let them who have eyes to see the light—lips to announce it—limbs to work for it—struggle to make our country the everlasting home of an enlightened aspiring art: art which is an unceasing prayer for a nobler manhood for men.—Then shall the grandeur of our destiny be certain." *

Nothing, then, shall it invalidate that strong "unceasing prayer" that the instruments of genius are ephemeral; that the Fata Morgana palaces forever colour, or cloud, in changeful lights; for the quiet dreamer of old Concord was indeed right—and those palaces of Imagination are the only uncrumbling architecture.

Here, in the shadow of those cloud-capt palaces, I have followed in glitter and gloom, under portentous stars of a thousand-and-one nights, the mystic pilgrimage of a genius "prince" along the torrent of a biologic stream. Though the stream has been vaguely charted in time and place, yet its fecund source and goal are mystery. Though the pilgrim himself bears in his "strong hand" a special clan device, yet the meaning of its ancient motto—Courage—kins him with all who follow the same darkling path. How, then, can we name the torrent, unless as Life? How else can we hail the princely pilgrim himself, except as one of the courageous sons of Man?—To all, then, seekers of Life, its source and goal, and to all defiers of Fear, manu forti, the meanings of this memoir are dedicated. . . .

^{*} Cf. page i, 184.

CLEAR CONTOURS OF IMAGINED TOMORROWS

Once more I am there in that autumnal hour, toward sunset, where a gaunt skeleton of ruin looms Dantesque, gigantic, above the fairy porticos of "the White City." Once again my father silently leads me with my brothers—now strangely a mystic host with brotherly faces!—guiding us, through cluttered débris, to a grim iron stairway that climbs steeply skyward. Following his steps, silent, too, we ascend to that dizzy height, overlooking the far fountains, the lovely domes, the spacious plazas of festival. There the murmur of joyous humanity floats upward to us.

Then sudden thunder of darkness—torchflare—and swift whirl-pools of flame engulf the City of Faery, searing it black. . . . Then a silent marsh; the marge of a lake—and breast-high weeds—and a dump of refuse.

Once again my father seems neither to see, nor to hear. But now I know I am mistaken.—He hears; he sees. His eyes are focussed far off—beyond—on the clear contours of vast imagined to-morrows. . . . And now his gaze glows dreamily, quivering to a smile: a smile of serene power and certitude—so charming, so wonderful a smile, alluring us to follow his vision. . . . And now I know why he smiles:

The Lovely-Enduring-is beyond.





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BIOGRAPHER'S NOTE

The responsibility of writing this memoir has overhung the background of my thoughts for nearly two-thirds of my life, during all of my over-busy public career. Only recently I became aware that I really began to prepare for it (though then but half consciously) on a date of my boyhood—Nov. 10, 1892—when, two years before my father's death, I rescued from loss some of his scrapbooks, whose data here form the basis for several Chapters of his memoir. Under increasing urge of responsibility, in 1911, I turned momentarily from other pressures of work, to contribute for two issues of "The Drama Quarterly" (Nov., 1911—Feb., 1912) a brief outline of Steele MacKaye's work, which comprises the only sketch of his career till now published. Concerning that, on its appearance, James O'Donnell Bennett, dramatic critic, wrote in the Chicago Tribune an extensive review (quoted in "Bibliography"). See pages cv and cvi, of Addenda.

Eight years later, in New York, I was instrumental in planning a memorial meeting to my father, for which Daniel Frohman put at disposal his Lyceum Theatre, for the date of Feb. 4, 1916 (twenty-sixth anniversary of the opening of Hazel Kirke). As members of the committee for that proposed meeting were the following gentlemen, whose letters of cordial interest at the time I still possess:—Henry M. Alden, J. I. Clarke, William Courtleigh, Walter Damrosch, Henry E. Dixey, John Drew, Thomas A. Edison, Daniel Frohman, George Fawcett, Jules Guerin, Henry A. Gildersleeve, Childe Hassam, George C. Hazelton, Victor Herbert, William Dean Howells, F. F. Mackay, Augustus

Thomas, Francis Wilson, Henry Watterson.*

At that time, however, multitudinous duties, involved in producing my Shakespeare Masque, Caliban, prevented my needful attention to the memorial plans, which were then postponed. During succeeding years there followed many interrupted attempts to wrest time and opportunity to compass my desire and duty of writing this biography. At length, in Feb., 1923, I undertook the definite fulfilment of my task, for which I then decided to set all other work aside for one year. Since then, that one year has lengthened itself to four years, during all of which (with the exception of eight weeks, devoted to other literary work) I have been unintermittently engaged in preparing, writing and revising these two volumes. In this task my wife has been my constant co-worker, without whose resourceful zeal, patience and imaginative insight it would never have been accomplished.

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^{*}On January 31, 1916, from Miami, Florida, Col. Watterson then wrote to me: "There is nothing, my dear Percy, that I can possibly do to honour the memory of your father which it will not be a pride and a pleasure for me to do."

The labour of condensing original sources, often bulky and disorganized in themselves, has involved also tracing and verifying therein innumerable details. After completing the first draft, in March, 1926, I spent an added year in revising the whole and in gathering the visual records embodied in the illustrations herewith published. The sources of my material have been mainly as follows:

Letters, manuscripts and note-books of Steele MacKaye; letters of his father; diaries of his younger sister; letters and recorded memories of his family, relatives and friends; contemporary published commentaries and records concerning his career (collected in scrapbooks comprising about four million words—preserved, owned and largely compiled, during and since boyhood, by this biographer); notes personally gathered and set down by me, from relatives and friends; journals and recollections (written and oral) of my mother; diaries and memories of my own; family traditions.

Of the contents of *Epoch* at least nine-tenths comprise, I believe, material entirely new to the general reader; for most of the records here published are not to be found in libraries, and have remained unavailable, and uncoördinated, till now presented to the public.*—P. M-K., New York, May, 1927.

^{*} Cf. further statement on page cvi,

BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL RECORDS VOLUME ONE

Note: All the records in this Appendix are in reference to subjects treated in the text of "Epoch" (chiefly in footnotes), and follow in sequence the page numbers of the text.

PAGE

- THE MOTTO OF The Book of MacKay is: "Work wisely, and take 5 HEED TO THE END: BE VALIANT."
- THE CHILDREN OF WILLIAM KAY AND MARY MORISON WERE, IN ORDER OF AGE, 14 William ("Wallie"), Susan, Jane and Margaret Kay—(The Kay is sometimes spelled Kaye, in family letters). Susan married a Mr. Embleton, of Berwick on Tweed.—The children of "Wallie" Kay by his first wife (Elizabeth Morison (?)—perhaps a cousin?—whom he married in Scotland) were, in age sequence, Jane, Elizabeth, Susan and William Kay (3rd) .- Of these, the three daughters probably remained in Scotland (as the names of Jane and Elizabeth appear to have been duplicated, in the children of "Wallie" Kay, by his second wife, Sarah Wilkinson (McCracken), whom he married in America); but the son, William Kay 3rd (Col. James Morrison McKaye's half brother) came to America, where he had children, one of whom, Elizabeth Kay, married a Gansvoort. (She writes in a letter, to Agnes Kaye Paxton, that the first wife of "Wallie" Kay was named Elizabeth Morison.) In a letter—"Dec. 8, 1869, 63 Norfolk St., Glasgow, Scotland"—to Elizabeth Kay Gansvoort, Agnes Kaye Paxton writes (referring, by "your Uncle James," to Col. James Mc-Kaye): "On your Uncle James signing himself McKaye, I just acquiesced.— Susan Kaye-Embleton resides in Berwick-on-Tweed, seven miles from Norham, and one hundred miles from Glasgow."
- THE STORY OF RALPH ERSKINE'S WIFE. (AS WRITTEN-1925-TO 14 Percy MacKaye by Millicent Alling, daughter of Sarah McKay Alling, of Rochester, N. Y.)

William ("Wallie") Kay had a very weird story of Ralph Erskine's wife which he used to tell his children—they in turn to their children.

Mrs. Erskine, after a short illness, died. The night after her funeral a terrible storm came up. Mr. Erskine and his daughter were sitting in his study, overcome with sorrow, when suddenly a knock was heard upon the door .--"If your dear mother was alive, I should say that was her knock," said the poor gentleman. "Open, my daughter!" She did so, but ran back into the room, for there stood her mother in her winding sheet, her hair wet and all hanging about her face.—"Do not shut me out!" she cried. "I am alive."

It seemed that her hands were very much swollen when they put on the winding sheet, so much so that her rings could not be removed. Mr. Erskine

refused to have them removed. The butler saw them and at dusk he took a lantern, entered the vault intending to cut her fingers off, and so secure the rings. As soon as the blood began to flow, Mrs. Erskine's circulation was restored, for instead of being dead she had been in a trance.—Instantly she sat up, crying aloud to the man to stop. Terribly frightened, he started to run; but she promised that he should not be punished if he helped her home.

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The Church at Argyle, N. Y. attended by "Walle" Kay):

"The church itself (raised in 1787'88) was built of white-pine logs, 30x40 feet, and had a gallery in the east end. Opposite this was a high pulpit, shaped much like a square box. It was innocent of paint or tapestry, and was the simple pine as the carpenter left it. In front was the chorister's seat, and the seats for the audience were rough pine slabs, bark and all, supported by plain wooden legs.—In 1807 the old log church gave place to a good frame meeting house, costing \$3,000. March 4, 1818, the Rev. Peter Bullions was installed, and served as pastor until 1824, when he resigned to accept a professorship of languages at Albany." (From "History of Washington County," New York: Johnson; Philadelphia, 1878.)

18 Jane McCrea and the Indians. Version of the story, as told by Sarah McKay Alling, of Rochester, N. Y., and written down by her

daughter, Millicent Alling, 1923.

Jane McCrea was the daughter of a Scotch Presbyterian clergyman who settled in New Jersey. After his death she went to live with a brother in the neighborhood of Fort Edward. At the commencement of the Revolution she became engaged to a young man named David Jones; but he was a Royalist. He went to Canada where he received a commission as Lieutenant in a loyalist regiment. News came of the approach of Burgoyne's army. Jane's brother was a Whig, so he moved to a place of safety and sent for his sister. She at the time was visiting a Mrs. McNeil at Fort Edward. Her lover had probably communicated with her and she lingered from day to day in hopes of seeing him .- Lieut. David Jones, who was with the invading army, sent a band of Indians to bring her to the camp, promising them a keg of whiskey. His stay was very short and, as the Indians failed to arrive as soon as he expected, he despatched another band, promising them a keg of whiskey. The two bands met and a terrible quarrel ensued with regard to the reward, and as a result, Jane was murdered and buried under a pine tree, on William Kay's estate, near Fort Edward.-Her lover, Lieut. Jones, was broken-hearted. He returned to Canada soon after and lived to be an old man, but was always very silent and melancholv.

SARAH WILKINSON, BORN AT ENFIELD, CONN., AUGUST 21, 1777; MARRIED Samuel McCracken, of Granville, N. Y., April 17, 1795; married William Kay, of Argyle, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1805; died August 11, 1861, at 99 S. Fitzhugh Street, Rochester, N. Y.

21 James Morrison McKaye at "South Hall" (Wesleyan Uni-

versity), Middletown, Conn.

Because of the rivalry of Yale College, Captain Partridge's Academy failed to secure a state charter to constitute itself a regular college. In consequence, it was moved back, in 1829, to Norwich, Vermont. For Captain Partridge, however, there had been built, at Middletown, two substantial brick buildings, which—two or three years later—were taken over by the Methodist founders there of Wesleyan University. In one of those buildings ("South Hall," still standing, 1927) James Morrison McKay delivered, in 1826, his oration upon Adams and Jefferson.

23 STATEMENT OF KENNETH Y. ALLING (OF ROCHESTER), TO PERCY

MacKaye, 1923:

"Some friends of Colonel McKaye in Buffalo (during his residence there), leading citizens there in later years, were Judge Sheldon, Sherman Rogers, Samuel Savery, Oliver G. Steele, Townsend Glenny, James W. Evans, Edward Kinney (grain magnate), Dr. William Lord, Dean Richmond (controller of the New York Central)."

SARAH AND ELIZABETH LORING: A REUNION IN THEIR DESCENT. I.—Robert Fairservice and Elizabeth Barr were married at King's Chapel, in Boston, in 1740. Their only child, Elizabeth Fairservice, married, in Boston, David Loring, in 1764. Their children were Elizabeth (who married Col. Jeduthan Wellington), Sarah and David.—Sarah married Oliver Steele at Boston, in 1803.

Their children were Lucy Ann, Oliver Gray, Emily Benton, Lavinia P. Steele. -Emily B. Steele married James Morrison McKay. Their children were: Emily Benton, Sarah Loring, and James (Morrison) Steele McKay. James Steele McKaye married Mary Keith Medbery. Their children were as follows: Harold, William, James, Percy, Benton, Hazel.—Percy married Marion Homer Morse (the great-granddaughter of *Elizabeth Loring* Wellington).—Their children are: Robert Keith, Arvia, and Christy Loring MacKaye.

II .- Robert Fairservice and Elizabeth Barr were married in 1740. Their child, Elizabeth Fairservice, married David Loring in 1764. Their children were: Elizabeth, Sarah (who married Oliver Steele) and David. Elizabeth married Col. Jeduthan Wellington, in 1803. Their children were: Maria, Louisa, Alfred, Adeline.—Adeline Wellington married William Flagg Homer,

Their children were: Adeline Wellington, Mary Bartlett, Maria Mead, Horace Holly, Agnes, and Theodore.—Mary Bartlett Homer married, in 1868, Henry Lewis Morse of Walpole, N. H. (son of Dr. Ebenezer Morse, of Walpole, born in Dublin, N. H., and of Esther Crafts). Their children were Adeline Wellington and Marion Homer.—Marion Homer Morse married Percy (Wallace) MacKaye (the great-grandson of Sarah Loring Steele), at Shirley Center, Mass., Oct. 8, 1898. Their children are Robert Keith, Arvia, and Christy Loring MacKaye.

OLIVER GRAY STEELE (QUOTED FROM "PUBLICATIONS OF THE BUFFALO

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Historical Society," Vol. II, 1880):
"It was a joy to look into the home of Mr. and Mrs. O. G. Steele. They had taste and judgment, and their home was expressive of beauty and intelligence-handsomely but not extravagantly furnished, with some fine pictures and statuary and a library among the best private libraries in the city. They travelled in Europe and brought home many articles of value that gave a finish of refinement to their house. In his library Mr. Steele was at home.-He found time to read all through his life. Few men knew their books better than he. When in Europe, while his companions in travel were asleep, in morning hours, he wrote letters to friends at home. They were afterwards printed, not published, and the modest book always suggested to me Dr. Franklin."—Rev. George W. Hosmer, D.D.

STATEMENT OF FRANK B. STEELE, CONCERNING Beautiful Snow, 31 addressed to Percy MacKaye:

"Players Club, New York, Dec. 31, 1926. "Dear Percy: Henry Faxon was living in Buffalo at the time the poem, Beautiful Snow, was written by him. The story of its inception and publication was told to me by both my father and mother in the early 'Eighties or late 'Seventies,-Henry Faxon, who was my father's first cousin, was a frequent visitor at our house in Buffalo, at the time of my parents' marriage in 1859, and for some years previous had been working on the Buffalo Express. This was the same newspaper on which Mark Twain once worked in Buffalo, when he lived on Delaware Avenue and wrote his famous description of the Buffalo, Cemetery (about the skeletons coming to life and deploring their residential quarters, etc.).

"The story is that Henry Faxon was rather convivial in his habits, like many of the newspaper men of his day. His chum was a young man named Bert Scott, and it is well known in Buffalo history that they were practical jokers. It seems that there was some sort of an argument between them about the value of poetry, and how it could not be published or used in the current pages unless the poet had already made a name for himself. As the argument

waxed warmer, Faxon offered to bet Bert Scott that he could write a poem that would be published and read throughout the United States. The bet was made, and to win it Faxon wrote the poem, Beautiful Snow, and sent it to a prominent newspaper with the name of William Cullen Bryant (then very famous) signed to it. It was, of course, published and copied; but, in a very short time, Bryant denied his authorship of it and the affair made a small sensation. Naturally, it was taken up throughout the journalistic and literary world and Faxon, probably having some feeling of regret, did not say much about his own authorship of it to the general public, but it was perfectly well known in our family, from the time it was written, that Henry Faxon was the author.—Many years later, the matter was traced down and authenticated by the Boston Herald, which published practically the same story as given here by me. This was done with no assistance from our family. Your affectionate cousin, Frank B. Steele."

32 Col. Jeduthan Wellington, in response to the following printed card of invitation, was one of the handful of surviving veterans who were addressed by Daniel Webster at Bunker Hill:

"The Bunker Hill Monument Association requests that Jeduthan Wellington," a private in the Battle of Bunker Hill, would honor the Association with his presence at the ceremonies of laying the Corner Stone; at the Delivery of the Address; and at the dinner on the 17th June, 1825.—The Procession moves from the State House, Boston, at 10 o'clock, A. M."

45 In the First Unitarian Church of Buffalo is still preserved (1927) a tablet, with the following inscription:

"In Loyal Remembrance
Noah P. Sprague John W. Beals
Ira A. Blossom Elijah D. Efner
James McKay Samuel N. Callender
Who founded The First Unitarian
Congregational Society of Buffalo in 1832
We have entered into their Labor."

- BEFORE HER MARRIAGE WITH OLIVER STEELE, SARAH LORING HAD MARRIED A Mr. Bass, an invalid who died, leaving by that marriage a daughter, Mary Bass (half sister of Emily Steele), who married a Mr. Hotchkiss, of New Haven.
- Maria Ellery Goodwin (McKaye), was daughter of Frederick Goodwin, of Plymouth, Mass., a descendant of Miles Standish and Dr. Le Baron. Her maternal grandfather was Asher Robbins (U. S. Senator from Rhode Island, for 14 years), who married Maria Ellery, whose uncle, William Ellery, was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Maria Ellery McKaye was the author of several volumes of essays, including The Abbess of Port Royal and other French Studies (Boston, Lee and Shepard, 1892), with an introduction by Thomas Wentworth Higginson. She died at Paris, France, in Feb., 1908. By Col. James Morrison McKaye she had one son, Dr. Henry Goodwin McKaye, of Newport, R. I., a graduate of Harvard.
- 57 "The Buildings of Roe's Military Academy," writes (in 1926) my informer, Justice Arthur C. Salmon (who attended the school about 1862), "were
 - * Col. Jeduthan Wellington was the great-great-grandson of Roger Wellington (the original settler of Belmont), who married Mary Palgrave, 1638. Their son, Joseph, married Elizabeth Straight, 1684. Their son, Thomas, married Rebecca Whittemore. Their son, Joseph, married Dorcas Stone, 1733. Their son, Jeduthan Wellington, married Elizabeth Loring, 1803.

of wood, constructed for school purposes, and were adjacent to the estate of the noted author and publisher, Nathaniel Parker Willis, brother of Fanny Fern. As a boy, I recollect seeing a monument, erected on the Willis estate, by

Fanny Fern, in memory of her pet dog."

Justice Arthur C. Salmon, of the New York Court of Special Sessions, has written me further (August 23, 1926): "In the first or second year of the Civil War, I attended Roe's Military Academy at Cornwall. During my first term, the Rev. Dr. Roe, principal of the school, enlisted as a chaplain in the army. As a result, the school was broken up and thereafter ceased to exist, though it had been in existence several years before my time. It seems to me it was located practically on the present site of the New York Military Academy."

General M. F. Davis, head of the New York Military Academy, at Corwall, has informed me further (1926): "Mrs. H. C. Lee (a daughter of E. P. Roe), who lives in Cornwall, says that her uncle Alfred W. Roe's school was in a building on the main street in the village of Cornwall. It was an 1840 square brick building and is still in excellent repair. Dr. Alfred Roe was a noted instructor in mathematics, engineering and Greek. He went out to the Civil War as Chaplain of the 'Orange Blossoms,' an Orange County regiment. On returning from the war he conducted a girls' school in the same building. He died in Manchester, N. H. . . . The estate of N. P. Willis, now owned by Captain Charles Curie, is still known as 'Idlewild' and is as well kept up as when built in 1852." built in 1852."

On the site of the present New York Military Academy (so Mr. Ernest Abbott, editor of *The Outlook*, has informed me) stood a hotel, kept by James G. Roe, who—before the Civil War—may have used that building for school pur-

poses, in connection with his brother Alfred's military school.

CONCERNING THE ROUND TABLE (OF WHICH COL. JAMES MCKAYE WAS AN editor and James K. Medbery was a founder and editor, in 1863): Excerpt from The Magazine in America by Algernon Tassin, Dodd, Mead, 1916—"The Nation and The Round Table marked the beginning of a better era. Each was the exponent of a high-class, high-toned and well written weekly, which believed that people were something more than grown-up babies unable to digest anything more solid than Fanny Fern's tart paragraphs, but would listen to a serious discussion of serious topics, from a purely American point of view, without scissors, or pastepot." . . .

"The standards of The Round Table were unquestionably almost impossibly

idealistic. It was imbued with all the elegant New England tradition of letters

and of the exclusive function of high-class journalism.

The first issue of The Round Table (1863-1869) appeared Dec. 19, 1863. From that issue, the following is an excerpt from an editorial entitled "The Presi-

dential Succession":

"We know Mr. Lincoln and we know him for a man of political tact and personal magetism. Rarely does he incur animosity even where he excites displeasure. . . . Henceforth, outside of the army, whose chief commander he is, Abraham Lincoln has no rival for the great prize of next November."

From the same issue, the following is an excerpt from an editorial entitled "The Round Table":—"The Round Table is meant to be a reality of home life to all its readers. While the dark cloud of trial and endurance which now rests upon the land throws its shadow upon us, it is well that we should learn to think. . . . Lovelace could never have thrown such force of conviction into his song of Althea, if he had not actually been imprisoned. The reality of stone walls was needed to make him feel, that 'stone walls do not a prison make.'---We are in a fair way to have our stone walls set up about us now."

From internal evidence, based on their entirety, it would appear very probable that the above editorials were written respectively by Col. James McKaye

and by James K. Medbery.

From a correspondence between Col. Thomas Wentworth Hig-104 GINSON AND SARAH ("SAIDIE") LORING McKAYE, THIS EXCERPT concerns an article of hers—Leaves from the Journal of a Poor Musician —for The Atlantic Monthly. (It was afterwards published in Putnam's Magazine, July and Aug., 1868.)

"Newport, R. I., February 19, 1865.

"My dear Miss Saidie: I shall be very glad to render any aid to your literary plans; the choice of a subject sounds good. . . . If you will send me the manuscript, I think I can secure its being more promptly read than might otherwise be the case; and then again, though Mr. Fields, the editor, is an excellent critic, still the best are liable to attacks of crossness or dyspepsia, and I have noticed that sometimes the opinion of an intermediate friend has weight in such cases. . . . If I don't like the story, I won't tell him so, but will tell you so, and why. You can send it by Miss Goodwin, if she is coming soon—or, if she is not behind the scenes, send it by mail. Very sincerely your friend, T. W. Higginson."

At a later period, Col. T. W. Higginson wrote an Introduction to the volume by "Miss Sadie's" stepmother, Maria Ellery Goodwin McKaye, entitled *The Abbess of Port Royal and Other French Studies*, Boston, Lee & Shepard, 1892.

108 STATEMENT BY IDA M. TARBELL (NEW YORK, FEB. 16, 1927) CONCERNING LINCOLN, FRANK B. CARPENTER, COL. JAMES MCKAYE AND THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION:

"Among the small group of people that can be said to have been, for a longer or shorter period, intimates of the Lincoln family when they occupied the White House, must be numbered the artist, Frank B. Carpenter. He spent six months with the Lincolns, in 1864, painting the only great historical canvas that has come down to us from the time:—'A First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation,' which now hangs in the Capitol, at Washington. Carpenter won the friendliness of the entire household while living in the White House. The President from the start took keen interest in his work, sat patiently, and talked to him freely on all sorts of matters, so freely that later Carpenter wrote a little volume of reminiscences of his experience which is not surpassed in veracity, sympathy or understanding by any recollections we have.

"A fresh contribution to what we know of the man who made these invaluable Lincoln records comes in the volume, *Epoch* by Percy Mac-Kaye, concerned with the life and times of that remarkable and versatile

dramatist, Steele MacKaye.

"Carpenter grew up in New York with the MacKayes. He had the run of the house on East 19th Street of the grandfather, Col. James MacKaye and that of his neighbor and close friend, Robert Dale Owen. No doubt the young man's enthusiasm for perpetuating forever on canvas the first reading of Lincoln's great Prolamation was warmly sympathized with by these two notable friends of freedom. Col. James MacKaye was on intimate personal terms with the President, and his voice was probably added to the several that were needed to procure for Carpenter the freedom of the White House while he painted his picture. Not only does Percy MacKaye give us help in his volume in building up Carpenter himself, but unexpectedly he adds a remarkable record of a stage in the composing and painting of his famous picture—a photograph taken no doubt for his own guidance and probably just before he arrived at the arrangement we have in the final work. This valuable find of Mr. MacKaye's is particularly notable for the portrait

of Lincoln, which is greatly superior to the one in the finished picture. One cannot but regret that in the finishing of the work Carpenter lost much of the vigor and liveliness of the Lincoln head, which the photograph here reproduced shows that he at one time caught.—Ida M. Tarbell."

In the New York Times Sunday Magazine, Feb. 27, 1927, appeared an article by Percy MacKaye, illustrated by Frank B. Carpenter's painting (in its completed form), embodying some of the material recorded in Chapter III of *Epoch*, with some additional commentaries of the writer.

117 Rebecca Belknap Stetson—daughter of Jesse Stetson (son of James Stetson) and Sarah Dickerman, of Roxbury, Mass. (who were married in 1801)—was born March 27, 1808, in Brookline, Mass. On Oct. 26, 1829, she was married to Rev. M. Kalloch, by whom she had no children. The year following his death, she was married, Sept. 4, 1837, at Charlestown, Mass., to Rev. Nicholas Medbery (born, Aug. 27, 1800, at Rehobeth, near Providence, R. I.; died, Jan., 1878, at Dover, Mass.); she died at Lynn, Mass., in the autumn of 1867. Their children were James Knowles Medbery (born, in Watertown, Mass., June 28, 1838; died at Denmark Hill, London, Aug. 31, 1873), and Mary (Ellen) Keith Medbery (born in Newburyport, Mass., July 11, 1845; died at Alexandria, Virginia, May 14, 1924).—By his first wife, Mary Keith (for whom Mary Keith Medbery was named), Nicholas Medbery had a son, named Edwin.

Nicholas Medbery was a direct descendant of Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, by the following line: Mercy Williams (daughter of Roger Williams) married Resolved Waterman, whose daughter, Waite Waterman, married John Rhodes. Their son, John Rhodes, 2nd, married Catherine Holden. Their son, Charles Rhodes, married Ann Almy. Their son, Peter Rhodes, married Esther Arnold. Their daughter, Phæbe Rhodes, married Josiah Medbery. Their son, Nicholas Medbery, married Rebecca Belknap Stetson. Their daughter, Mary

Keith Medbery, married James Steele McKaye.

123 EXCERPT FROM PHOTOSCULPTURE PROSPECTUS—1866—(WRITTEN BY

JAMES STEELE MCKAYE).

"A person desiring a statuette, bust, or medallion of himself need pose but once, from one to twelve seconds. In these few seconds twenty-four photographs, from points at equal intervals in a circle around the sitter, are simultaneously obtained. From each of these, by a magic lantern, an outline is traced on card or paper. These outlines are then adjusted upon a board so as to make the established axis of the figure in each tracing perfectly parallel to the axis of the clay upon the platform of the machine. Then the Pantograph is used, one arm of which follows the tracings on paper, the other—which contains a clay-saw, or needle,—being governed by the tracing arm. The figure is cut by revolving the clay upon its axis (while tracing from the drawing), by degrees corresponding with the intervals of view between the photographs obtained in the Rotunda. As the twenty-four outlines are thus successively cut,

the bust, or statuette, gradually appears. The finishing touches are given by a sculptor."

EXCERPT FROM A WRITTEN STATEMENT BY MRS. STEELE MACKAYE: 136 "Delsarte fully intended that Mr. MacKaye should inherit his notes and papers. This he declared again and again. I well remember one occasion when, after the cours was over, Delsarte led Mr. MacKaye and me to the tall armoire standing against the wall, and, opening the door, showed us the piles of papers which filled all the shelves. Putting his hand affectionately upon my husband's shoulder he said: 'This is your inheritance. All this is to be yours.' Death, however, came suddenly, and no provision was made. Mr. MacKaye was, of course most anxious to obtain possession of the papers, and, as Mr. Alger was then in France -he very gladly accepted his assistance in securing them, Mr. Alger. finding that Mme. Delsarte was willing to dispose of her husband's papers, made arrangements through M. Gustave Delsarte to purchase the whole of Delsarte's manuscripts for Mr. MacKaye. But, in the meantime, Mr. MacKave had communicated with his father, who was at that time in Paris, telling him of his desire to secure the manuscripts; and Col. MacKaye, glad to please his son, bought the papers, of Mme. Delsarte.

"Mr. MacKaye and the other friends of Delsarte in this country were overjoyed when the news reached them, and they eagerly awaited the arrival of the precious manuscripts. In due time, the box containing them arrived, and was in the hands of the impatient friends. The size of the box * gave the first pang of disappointment to Mr. MacKaye. It was one of those small deal packing boxes, so familiar to every one who has been in France, and Mr. MacKaye well knew that the piles of papers he had so often seen in the tall armoire could not be contained in it. But his disappointment was changed to dismay when, on opening the box, he found it filled with a mass of mere notes out of which, at first search, it was impossible to find any coherent connection upon any subject. It was indeed the chips from the workshop, but chips divided into minutest fragments. Mr. Alger and Prof. Monroe also examined the papers with the same result of deep disappointment."

From an Interview with Steele Mackaye, Dec., 1879: 140

"My studies with Delsarte were interrupted by the Franco-Prussian War. I was travelling in Switzerland with a party for a short vacation. in July of 1870, when-on account of the impending struggle-I hastened back to Paris to look after my apartments. I arrived there and packed my trunks, only to find that it was impossible to get them out of town.—That night, with a single companion, I left my rooms with one trunk and two large valises and with a satchel strung over my shoulder containing 18,000 francs in gold. All the rest of my things I left locked in trunks at my apartments. I never shall forget that night. You cannot imagine such a mob as surrounded every railroad station, for

^{*} This Delsarte manuscript "box" (a wooden trunk, with lock and metal clasps) is owned-1927-by Percy MacKaye.

every one knew that Prussian soldiers were swarming over the frontier,

and that the siege might begin at any moment.

"My companion, Count Seissel, was a Prussian by birth, who had lived for many years in America, and was in fact a naturalised American. But his face was unmistakably German, and the sight of it made the excited French mob fairly crazy. His explanations to the crowd in German-French added to their fury, and for a few moments I thought he would be torn to pieces. I told him to answer every question in English and let me explain in French that he was an American. Thus we worked our way through the mob, I with that dead weight of gold hanging from my shoulder. I had bought a first-class ticket and, on reaching the train, heaven knows how, I climbed into a third-class car and escaped. I subsequently heard that two more trains got away from Paris after ours. Then the siege began, and all communication with the outer world was cut off. Returning to Switzerland, I joined my party. We travelled through Germany to Belgium, and thence reached England in safety. On the same night that I escaped from Paris from the southern station, my master, Delsarte, escaped by way of the northern station."

THE FOLLOWING INVITATION WAS RECEIVED BY MACKAYE FROM BROOKlyn in late April or early May, 1871:

"JAMES STEELE MACKAYE, Esq.—Sir: The undersigned, some of whom have had the pleasure of listening to those interesting and instructive lectures which you recently delivered in New York and Boston, upon Delsarte's Science and Art of Dramatic Expression, respectfully request you to repeat the same in Brooklyn:

"HENRY WARD BEECHER
R. R. RAYMOND
NOAH HUNT SCHENCK
WM. JOEL BUDINGTON
R. D. BENEDICT

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A Priest .

D. H. COCHRAN E. S. MILLS HOMER B. SPRAGUE E. N. TAFT."

MR. BAUER

STEELE MACKAYE AS Hamlet AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE, LONDON

First Performance May 3, 1873

"DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Claudius (King of Denmark) Mr. Archer								
(By kind permission of Miss Ada Cavendish)								
Ghost of Hamlet's Father Mr. Actor								
Hamlet (Son of the late and nephew of the present King)								
MR. J. STEELE MACKAYE								
(Pupil of the late M. Delsarte and of M. Regnier at the								
Conservatoire, Paris)								
Polonius (Lord Chamberlain) Mr. C. P. Flockton								
Horatio (Friend to Hamlet) Mr. Boleyn								
Lærtes (Son of Polonius) Mr. Leathes								
Rosencrantz Mr. Anstruther								
Guildenstern Mr. Travers								
Osric Mr. F. CHARLES								
(By kind permission of Messrs. Webster and Chatterton)								

$egin{array}{ll} Francisco & ext{Of the} \ Bernardo & ext{Royal} \ Marcellus & ext{Body Guard} \end{array}$	}		Mr. Campbell Mr. Ernest Mr. Maxwell
First Player			Mr. Kelly
Second Player			Mr. Milton
(By kind permi	ssion of Miss.	Ada Caver	idish)
	rmission of M	iss Hodson	<i>i</i>)
Reynaldo (Servant to Polo Gertrude (Queen of Denna	ark and Moth	er to	
Hamlet)	onius)		MISS F. HUDDART MISS CARLISLE
Player Queen			

As You Like It: IN LONDON. 218

"29 Wellington Street, Strand: Nov. 25, 1373.

"JAMES STEELE MACKAYE, ESQ.—DEAR SIR: Miss Helen Faucit has kindly offered to play Rosalind in As You Like It for the benefit of the Royal General Theatrical Fund at a morning performance, Haymarket Theatre, on the 17th or 18th of December. Your name was mentioned for Orlando in the play, and I am desired by the Directors to ask your valuable aid on the occasion. Your consent to play the part will be received with much pleasure by the Directors, and also by Yours faithfully-G. EVERETT CULLENFORD, Secretary."

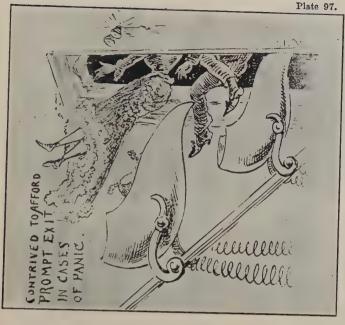
Note: The cast of characters, at this performance, which took place on December 20, 1873, at the Haymarket Theatre, was as follows: Duke Frederick......Mr. George Vincent Le Beau.....Mr. CHARLES WYNDHAM Charles [A wrestler].....Mr. Egan Oliver......Mr. Howard Russell Orlando......MR. J. STEELE MACKAYE Jacques.....Mr. Ryder

Touchstone......Mr. Compton William.....Mr. J. Clarke Sylvius.......Mr. Charles Neville First Lord......Mr. Russell Celia.....Miss Henrietta Hodson Ph@be......Miss Kate Bishop

Audrey...... Mrs. E. Fitzwilliam Rosalind.......Miss Helen Faucit The directors acknowledge, with sincere thanks, the kindness of J. B. Buckstone, F. B. Chatterton, J. Guiver, H. J. Montague, H. Neville, Miss Henrietta Hodson, Miss Marie Litton and Mrs. Seymour."

220 DOCUMENTS-TOM TAYLOR & J. STEELE MACKAYE On January 23rd, '74, Tom Taylor wrote:

"Dear MacKaye: All right, I will think over our arrangements. Please make our appointment for tomorrow at eleven instead of one, as I want to get the business over early, that I may join our children and some little friends, at the circus.—I think 'Time Tells All' a good title, or perhaps 'The End of the Game'; but 'Time Tells All' I prefer.—Yours ever, T. T."









NEWSPAPER CARTOONS, 1885, ON MACKAYE'S "UTOPIAN THEATRE"

MOMENT'S NUTICE

MAY ELEVATE AT A O BE CVERHEARD

("In the event of alarm of FIRE, any person can inundate the poking fun at his numerous new inventions, installed in his just opened Lyceum Theatre, especially at his patent foldingchair, and his unprecedented devices for fire-protection. theatre," exclaims the above picture.) -cf. p. ii, 11.



FRANK B. CARPENTER, about 1869.



William E. Payson, about 1869. (pp. i, 123, 126, 416; ii. 335.)



MRS. ELIZABETH THOMPSON, 1860.



SCRIPT OF F. B. CARPENTER, 1864



Masonic Emblem (cf. p. ii, 188.)

Mrs. Thompson (cf. pp. i, 106, 235) presented to Congress F. B. Carpenter's painting of the Emancipation Proclamation, of which the photo of an early version, 1864, has pasted on the back the above handwriting of Carpenter. (cf. p. i, 166.)—In Mrs. Thompson's house, 46 E. 10th St., New York, Carpenter and Wm. E. Payson, devoted friends of Steele MacKaye, lived with MacKaye, 1874'75.—The above Masonic Emblem (owned by Edwin Booth Grossman) was presented to Edwin Booth, on his birthday, Nov. 13, 1889, by Steele MacKaye. (cf. p. ii, 188.)

On the next day the following document was signed:

"Temple Club, Arundel Street, Strand, London, January 24th, 1874.

"I—the undersigned—do hereby certify that J. Steele MacKaye of New York City, N. Y. State, United States of America, is my co-laborer in the production—or the preparation—of the following plays for America, and I do further recognize him as joint author with me in the writing of these plays for the public of the United States of America, these plays bearing the following titles: 'Arkwright's Wife'

Time Tells All'

'Lady Clancarty, or Wedded and Wooed'

'The White Rose of Allandale' (a story of the 45)

'The First Printer'

'Twixt Axe and Crown'

'A Homeopathic Cure'
'The Yellow Domino'

'Joan of Arc'

'Alive at the Roots'

'Between Block and Altar'

'Lady Withsdale'

'Raleigh'

'A Queen's Revenge'

'Wat Tyler, or the Villain's War'

'Cromwell, or God's Guidance.'-Tom Taylor.

Signed by Tom Taylor in the presence of I. Nunn, Vice Deputy Consul General U. S. A., London J. W. Frigout

Consulate General U. S. A. London."

On the same day and occasion a two years' and a half contract was drawn up between Tom Taylor and J. Steele MacKaye, appointing MacKaye Taylor's sole representative in the United States and "The Canadas of America" for the production, sale and rental of the above plays, MacKaye to proceed to America within seven months and there do his best to dispose of the plays above enumerated.—In the first six of the plays listed, MacKaye had had an anonymous part in collaborating, but probably not in the others. All, however, were here cited as collaborations for the purpose of technically holding the copyright in America from pirating, MacKaye being a citizen of the United States.—Soon after MacKaye reached America, with the approval of Tom Taylor, he made a one year's contract (June 25th, 1874) with Simmonds and Wall, dramatic agents, New York, appointing them as his agents for placing the said plays in the United States and Canada.

230 A RADICAL FOOL: FOUR LETTERS FROM H. J. MONTAGUE.

At about the time he acted Orlando in London, MacKaye became friends there with H. J. Montague, and afterwards urged him to visit America, where Montague had a brilliant career at Wallack's Theatre, New York, and elsewhere, from 1874 till his untimely death in San Francisco, August 11, 1878. (Shortly before his coming to America, Montague's engagement to Miss Kate Terry had recently been broken off.) In London MacKaye had interested Montague in his play, A Radical Fool, with which the following four letters to MacKaye from Montague are concerned:

(I) "New York, 13 Aug., 1874. You see that I have carried out my halfimplied threat to visit your country. I arrived Tuesday last and intend staying about a fortnight. I don't know whether you are in Boston, but I address this (having lost the card you gave me in England) to the theatre, in the hope that it will get to you safely. Have you done anything about your piece yet? If I can co-operate with you for its production here about October next—with myself in the principal part—I shall be happy to do so, but perhaps you have made

your arrangements already."

(II) "20 East 15th St., Monday afternoon (August, 1874). I got your letter duly, but was hurrying through to Long Branch and therefore did not have time to acknowledge it. I am glad to hear about the piece and if you will allow me to hear it with the assurance that not a soul shall see it, I would like to go over it again quietly by myself. I am staying at Mr. Wallack's, Stamford, Conn., and there in the quiet and secluded shades I will speedily let you know the result of my cogitations. Will you send it me by express as above?"

(III) "Monday, 5 P. M. (Probably late Sept. of 1874*). See Palmer directly and shew him that paper with the cast on it—so that we can call the piece for reading at 11 at Union Square—rehearse it afterward. The piece is advertised for next Monday and knowing the case I think that it could be done as easily there on Monday week,—but I am sorry that you gave Palmer the idea that I liked and permitted the title, Radical Fool,—let it go now, though,—but it will be hard work to get it ready. See that every one in the cast is notified that the call is to-morrow at 11—Union Square Theatre. I am coming over to-night and will meet you if you like at the Union Square Hotel about 11 to 12."

(Note: The envelope to this Letter III is addressed as follows: "A. M. Palmer, Esq., Union Square Theatre—J. Steele MacKaye, or Alfred Becks—

This letter to get to Mr. MacKaye before 9 o'clock.")

*On Sept. 23, '74, MacKaye was in New York, where he wrote to his wife at Dover, Mass. (where she was visiting her father, Rev. N. Medbery).

For what reason the play was not produced at the Union Square is not known to this biographer; probably because of two greatly successful first runs: Boucicault's *The Shanghraun* (in which, at Wallack's, Montague acted *Capt. Molineux* from Nov. 14, '74, to April 1, '75), and *The Two Orphans*, at the Union Square (from Dec. 21, '74, to June 15, '75). But in the following year (1875) Montague wrote again as follows:

(IV) "Wallack's. My dear MacKaye: Have you done anything, or do you intend doing anything, with A Radical Fool? Entre nous I think there is a chance of something occurring here that may give it an immediate opening. Of course Mr. Wallack and I have read it. In haste, faithfully yours.—H. J. Montague. Will you wire me, and I'll meet you."

Telegram: Dated—New York, August 28, 187? (perhaps '74): "To—Mac-Kaye, Mrs. Newman's, City, Calverns St.—Think can arrange with Wallack to produce piece following Clancarty. When could I see you with piece? Mon-

tague (17 John)."

231 "VI. Gamuts of Expression in the Face. (In these exercises the features pass with careful precision through a series of expressions, closely allied in nature, dissolving very slowly the one into the other.)

	First Gamut		Second Gamut		Third Gamu
1	Indifference	1	Sobriety	1	Repose
2	Morosity		Animation	2	Attention
3	Distress	3	Jollity		Stupor
4	Grief	4	Tipsiness		Amazement
	Despair	5	Imbecility		Horror
6	Physical Pain	6	Drunkenness		Terror
7	Agony	7	Sottishness		Madness

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"VII. GAMUT OF EMOTION IN PANTOMIME.

	Reflection	11	Indignant Command
2	Meditation		Repeated Emphasized Command
3	Pleasant Surprise		Curiosity
4	Gentle Salutation		Terrifying Surprise
5	Affectionate Appellation		Appeal for Mercy
6	Kindly Reassurance		Blank Amazement
7	Sincere Affirmation	17	Ardent Admiration
8	Astonishment at being disturbed		Loving Contemplation
	and accused		Passionate Entreaty
9	Growing Indignation		Reverent Homage
	Anger		Calm Resignation"

229 "Boston Museum: Mr. R. M. Field, Manager.

Monday, October 26th, 1874. First Times in America of Tom Taylor's New Play—a brilliant success of the last London season—entitled Arkwright's Wife.

Richard Arkwright, the Bolton Barber.Mr. Chas. BarronPeter Hayes, a Reed-maker.R. F. McClanninHilkiah Lawson, a Sheriff's Clerk.W. J. LeMoyneSir Richard Clayton, a Manufacturer.J. BurrowsDick O'Johns $\{$ J. NolanBob O'ChowbentLeaders of the Mob. $\{$ J. NolanChadwickManufacturersA. S. H. MurrayOrmrodandC. S. MasonHaworthMagistratesF. EdmondsBailiff.L. J. LoringBoyMiss Sadie HenleyMargaret HayesMiss Fannie ClarkeNancy Hyde, a Lancashire LassMiss Fannie HaywardMay, a Factory GirlMiss Lillie JoyceFactory Men and Women, Mob, Soldiers, &c.Act 1: Keeping Room, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767.Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
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$ \begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$
Dick O'Johns
$ \begin{array}{c} Chadwick \\ Ormrod \\ Haworth \\ Magistrates \\ Bailiff \\ Bay \\ Margaret Hayes \\ Many a Factory Girl \\ May ar Bay Gom, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767. \\ Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768. \\ $
$ \begin{array}{c} Chadwick \\ Ormrod \\ Haworth \\ Magistrates \\ Bailiff \\ Bay \\ Margaret Hayes \\ Many a Factory Girl \\ May ar Bay Gom, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767. \\ Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768. \\ $
Ormrod and C. S. Mason Haworth Magistrates F. Edmonds Bailiff L. J. Loring Boy Miss Sadie Henley Margaret Hayes Miss Annie Clarke Nancy Hyde, a Lancashire Lass Miss Fannie Hayward May, a Factory Girl Miss Lillie Joyce Factory Men and Women, Mob, Soldiers, &c. Act 1: Keeping Room, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767. Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
Ormrod and C. S. Mason Haworth Magistrates F. Edmonds Bailiff L. J. Loring Boy Miss Sadie Henley Margaret Hayes Miss Annie Clarke Nancy Hyde, a Lancashire Lass Miss Fannie Hayward May, a Factory Girl Miss Lillie Joyce Factory Men and Women, Mob, Soldiers, &c. Act 1: Keeping Room, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767. Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
Havorth Magistrates F. Edmonds Bailiff. L. J. Loring Boy. Miss Sadie Henley Margaret Hayes. Miss Annie Clarke Nancy Hyde, a Lancashire Lass. Miss Fannie Hayward May, a Factory Girl. Miss Lillie Joyce Factory Men and Women, Mob, Soldiers, &c. Act 1: Keeping Room, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767. Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
Bailiff
Boy
Margaret Hayes
Nancy Hyde, a Lancashire Lass. Miss Fannie Hayward May, a Factory Girl. Miss Lillie Joyce Factory Men and Women, Mob, Soldiers, &c. Act 1: Keeping Room, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767. Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
May, a Factory Girl
Factory Men and Women, Mob, Soldiers, &c. Act 1: Keeping Room, or House Place, of Peter Hayes, in Leigh. 1767. Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
Act 2: Richard Arkwright's House at Bolton. 1768.
Act 2. A Distruscore Davine of Divisiona Clough 1786"
Act 3: A Picturesque Ravine at Birkacre, Clough. 1786."

ARKWRIGHT'S WIFE

(As First Produced at Leeds, England, July 7, 1873)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Note: In a collection of Tom Taylor's plays, published during his lifetime, Taylor gives credit to J. Steele MacKaye for collaboration in "Arkwright's Wife," included in the volume.—The cast of the original production was as follows:

"Richard Arkwright
Peter Hayes (A reed-maker and mechanical inventor)
Mr. J. Steele MacKaye
Hilkiah LawsonMr. Henry Ferrand
Dick O' JohnsMr. Charles Anstruther
Bob O' ChowbentMr. Harry St. Maur
Chadwick
OrmrodMr. William Macfarlane
Sir Richard ClaytonMr, Bauer

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HaworthMr. Melton
BailiffMr. Johnson
Margaret Hayes
Nancy Hyde Miss A M Kelly
Soldiers, Rioters, Charity Children, Village Lasses
Act 1Leigh
Act 2Preston
Act 3

During the year 1877, Steele Mackaye delivered in New York (or in Brooklyn) a series of lectures on "The Scientific Basis of Æsthetics," at the Student Lyceum, attended, amongst other students, by Miss Emma B. Beach, who took carefully illustrated notes. Afterwards Miss Beach became the wife of the famous artist, Abbott H. Thayer, of Dublin, N. H., where—in 1906—she presented her old notebook of 1877 to Percy Mackaye.

(1) BISHOP POTTER TO STEELE MACKAYE (FEB. 4, 1880):

"Here I have sketched a form of invitation such as I think would answer the purpose of which we spoke yesterday. If it strikes you favourably, I will secure the Hall of the N. Y. Historical Society, and will send the invitations out generally.—Of course, to the general invitation, I should add a line to the particular individual, going more into detail. Please let me know if my sketch meets your views."

(2) STEELE MACKAYE TO BISHOP POTTER (FEB. 6):

"I beg to apologise for my delay in replying to your very kind note of the 4th inst. The labour of opening the Theatre, and of getting its various departments into working order, has kept me incessantly busy night and day. . . I would suggest one slight change in the note of invitation you sent me. Instead of the expression 'Dramatic Reform'— I submit to you a longer,—but it seems to me, under the circumstances, a wiser designation of the subject—namely—a statement concerning the dangerous influences of the Theatre and the practical way to overcome them.

"The use of the word 'reform,' I fear, might excite, in the minds of many, the idea that I wished to assume an attitude of superior morality of purpose toward my fellow-managers in this City.-Though I think I may truly say that I seek first purity of purpose in all the plays I have to produce—and last the pecuniary reward for my work,—yet it would go far to destroy my own influence for good in my special field, if I assumed in any public way the title of a reformer. I earnestly desire to be precisely this, but to be it effectually I must be careful not to alienate the goodwill of any person, in or out of the profession, by appearing to hold myself as of superior importance in the work it is so vital now to have done.—I desire to be quietly and unobtrusively one of many engaged in it, and in order to reach those who can do most to convert the Drama to good instead of evil purpose, I should rejoice to meet the gentlemen you have so kindly offered to invite-and to give them the results of many years' special study of the subject, growing out of an intimate acquaintance with the rank and file of the profession, as well as the nature of the influence exerted by the theatre over the masses. With the most grateful sense of obligation to you for your

willingness to secure the Drama a fair hearing from the Clergy, I remain Sincerely yours."

(3) BISHOP POTTER TO STEELE MACKAYE (FEB. 12): "Many thanks for your note. I will give you a week or ten days' notice of the day appointed, and will send you a list of the gentlemen invited. I quite agree with the suggestion which you make, as to the statement of the topic. It is much better than mine. I am heartily glad to hear that all is going well with you .- Sincerely yours."

339 IN A PUBLISHED INTERVIEW (JAN. 10, 189-?) ALLSTON BROWN, AU-THOR OF The History of the New York Stage, STATED:

"The original plan was to keep the play for six weeks, but so severe were the critics in their condemnation of it on the opening night that its business suffered materially. So firmly were the management impressed with the utter folly of keeping Hazel Kirke on, that during the first week they put Charles Reade's Masks and Faces in rehearsal, with Rose Coghlan as Peg Woffington."

This statement, the gist of which Brown has incorporated in his *History*, is misinformed, I believe, in three respects: From all contemporary evidence at my disposal, (1) the critics, though not flattering to the play, did not severely condemn it: they expressed a fairly even balance of praise and censure: (2) by the end of the first week there was "standing room only," * and (3) the true reason for putting Masks and Faces in rehearsal was because the play, as An Iron Will, had experienced such bad business on its road tour, that its chances of success in New York were considered by the management very precarious, before the opening. This Daniel Frohman, who managed the tour, has thus confirmed in a letter to me, in 1925, as follows:

"I was asked, when we came near to the New York date, how long I thought the play would run there. I said, 'About six or eight weeks.' So Steele Mac-Kaye* immediately got ready a revival of Masks and Faces, to follow, with Rose Coghlan (already engaged by contract to act at the Mad. Sq., that season), to play Peg Woffington. Rehearsals were begun; but Hazel Kirke kept up and refused to down. So, Rose Coghlan was paid her weekly salary by myself for thirty-five weeks, at \$200 per week.—Then she sued, because she claimed the management was keeping her from the stage and thus jeopardizing her artistic reputation. But the courts decided in favour of the management, as they met the financial obligations involved regularly; and so the play Hazel Kirke ran on for 486 consecutive performances—at that time an unprecedented run.

(Among my father's papers, a contract, dated Oct. 20, 1879, between "Miss Rose Coghlan and Steele MacKaye, manager of the Madison Square Theatre," signed by Rose Coghlan, and witnessed by Percy C. Winter, states that Miss Coghlan "has been engaged in leading Comedy and Emotional rôles, by said Steele MacKaye, and agrees to act under his management and sole directorship, the characters which may be allotted to her in such plays as shall be produced during this engagement, which is to commence on or about Dec. 8th, 1879, and

continue until June 1st, 1880."-P. M-K.)

"A NEW DROP-CURTAIN. A DECORATIVE EMBROIDERY AT THE MADI-348 SON SQUARE THEATRE." (From the New York Tribune of May 2, 1880. Note: Cf. reference by Oscar Wilde to this curtain, on page i, 449.)

"Yesterday afternoon invited guests, representing all the little worlds of our social planetary system, assembled in the Madison Square Theatre to inspect the new embroidered drop-curtain, which replaces the beautiful embroidered curtain which was burned soon after the theatre's opening.

*"Overcrowded on the first night and ever since," wrote the Times, "more than 300 persons were turned away on the first Saturday."

* MacKaye also, probably in hopes of bettering his own play's chances, then altered its name to Hazel Kirke at the eleventh hour, shortly before the opening.

"To us the pleasure of sitting in this theatre consists in the unity of the whole affair—in the solid foundation of sense and utility which Mr. MacKaye has laid with infinite ingenuity and determined will; in the beauty of the architect's lines, the harmony of proportions, the elegance and the novelty of details, and finally in the beauty, taste, and exquisite workmanship of Mr. Louis C. Tiffany's and Mrs. Wheeler's curtain, upon which the pleased eye rests as upon a sunny landscape seen from the cool and somewhat sombre richness of a grotto. "It is a simple praise to give this curtain that it is the most beautiful that has ever been seen, the fact being that nothing like it has ever before been produced.—The design of the curtain is a landscape of our Southern country, the border of a stream in Florida. The ground on which the embroidery is wrought

has ever been seen, the fact being that nothing like it has ever before been produced.—The design of the curtain is a landscape of our Southern country, the border of a stream in Florida. The ground on which the embroidery is wrought is of satin and velvet, these latter materials being employed for the water and sandy shore, while satin is employed for the background, a misty exhalation through which the sun strikes and turns it into amber.—The flowery thicket that fringes the bank, the beautiful cleanders, the night-blooming cereus with its snow-white flowers, the canopy of wisteria that overhangs the whole, with the pink curlew whose delicate body gives so much life and lightness to the foreground—all these, with the hundreds of tinsel butterflies and fireflies that glance and sparkle here and everywhere, are brought to their final perfection."

350 A GLANCE AT MACKAYE'S EVOLUTION, 1880. A Note by P.M.-K.

In boyhood and youth, Steele MacKaye had grappled with his self-appointed task alone, in his own study, and determined its nature and goal, relating it to his studies in painting with Hunt, Inness, Troyon and Gérôme. In young manhood, at Paris, though enthused by his dreamy master, Delsarte, to an overemphasis of the philosophical, yet there he himself had devised and perfected practical "gamuts" of expression, winning from his master superlative praise and the title of "successor."—Returning to America he sought to widen this embodiment of æsthetic principles by their definite application to the theatre's many-sided art, in his first theatrical production at the St. James Theatre. In this he succeeded to the extent of a bold first experiment.

Carrying back the benefit of this experience, once more, to Paris, with emphasis now on the actor's art per se, he worked with fierce concentration and again wrested success, winning the encomium of his master, Régnier, director of the Théâtre Français.—In London, again, after bitter preliminary struggle, he won at one blow the highest success of an actor's aspiration, acclaimed by British critics in the part of Hamlet. -Ill health now turned him to another facet of his synthetic task-the art of the dramatist. Here, for the first time, he encountered no such exacting masters in ideals of perfection as he had found in Hunt and Inness, Troyon and Gérôme, Delsarte and Régnier, in painting, æsthetic philosophy and the art of acting. He sought out, however, the best existent in England at that transitional time—Charles Reade, W. G. Wills, Tom Taylor. Prone to idealisation, Steele MacKaye, as apprentice, idealised his playwright masters and their ideal of dramaturgy, and -once given that ideal to embody-again at one bound he succeeded, in his Rose Michel and Won at Last and in the unbounded popular success of his Hazel Kirke.

352 LETTER FROM E. H. SOTHERN TO PERCY MACKAYE REGARDING JOHN D. RAYMOND BENEFIT AT BOOTH'S THEATRE, JUNE 3, 1880:

"Litchfield, Conn., 25 July, 1925.

"My dear Percy—Yes—I was 'E. Dee Sothern.' I had taken the name of 'E. Dee' at the Boston Museum to hide my shame. My brother Sam as a baby could not say 'Eddy.' He could only get so far as 'D.' So that was my 'pet' name as a child. When I left the Musuem to join my father's company, I added 'Sothern.' I suppose by that time I was willing to die in my own name. 'Nat Goodwin, Jr.,' was our Nat Goodwin. I don't know why he was Junior except that there was a senior somewhere about. All good wishes, my dear Percy, especially for your life of your father! I am putting lines of a long part into my ancient head and it's quite a job. Always yours—E. H. Sothern."

Note: In this Benefit, E. A. Sothern, John McCullough, "Nat Goodwin, Jr.," W. J. Florence, John T. Raymond, Mrs. Sol Smith also took part.

354 THE FOLLOWING POEM BY WILLIAM WINTER, ORIGINALLY READ BY HIM AT Baltimore, in 1875, was part of the ceremonies for the Poe Statue Fund Benefit, at the Madison Square Theatre, New York, June 28, 1880:—

A Dirge, in Memory of Poe:

Read at the Dedication of the Monument to Edgar Allan Poe,
at Baltimore, Nov. 17th, 1875.

Cold is the pæan honour sings,
And chill is glory's icy breath,
And pale the garland memory brings
To grace the iron doors of death.

Fame's echoing thunders, long and loud,
The pomp of pride that decks the pall,
The plaudits of the vacant crowd—
One word of love is worth them all!

With dew of grief our eyes are dim:
Ah, let the tear of sorrow start,
And honour, in ourselves and him,
The great and tender human heart!

Through many a night of want and woe
His frenzied spirit wandered wild,
Till kind disaster laid him low,
And love reclaimed its wayward child.

Through many a year his fame has grown,— Like midnight, vast: like starlight, sweet; Till now his genius fills a throne, And homage makes his realm complete.

One need of justice, long delayed,
One crowning grace his virtues crave!
Ah, take, thou great and injured shade,
The love that sanctifies the grave.

And may thy spirit, hovering nigh,
Pierce the dense cloud of darkness through,
And know, with fame that cannot die,
Thou hast the world's compassion too.

355 POE MEMORIAL:

"221 E. 18th St., New York City, April 8th, 1885.

(1) "Steele MacKaye, Esq.—A meeting of the Poe Committee will take place at Delmonico's on Saturday evening, April 11th, at 8 p. m., by order of the

Chairman, Hon. A. S. Sullivan. Matter appertaining to the dedication of the

Marbles will be discussed.—Thos. McWatters, Secretary."

(2) "Steele MacKaye, Esq.—Dear Sir: The ceremony of unveiling the Poe Memorial will occur on Monday, May 4th, at 3 o'clock r. M., in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Will you kindly send me a list of those persons, and their addresses, to whom you want tickets sent.—A meeting of the Committee will be held on Friday, April 17th, at 8 o'clock P. M., in the house of the Chairman, Hon. A. S. Sullivan, 16 W. 11th St.—Thos. McWatters, Secretary (April 15, 1885)."

(3) "Steele MacKaye, Esq.—The interesting literary tributes to the genius of Edgar Allan Poe, which were delivered on the occasion of the unveiling of the Actors' Monument to that poet, in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, on Monday, May 4th, 1885, are to be published.—The pamphlet will contain the full text of the graceful Introductory Address by Hon. Algernon S. Sullivan; the speech presenting the monument to the Museum by Edwin Booth; the oration entitled 'The Mission and the Errors of Genius' by William R. Alger, and the poem by William Winter, read by the author on that day. The book will be handsomely printed by Theodore L. DeVinne & Co., 63 Murray St., and copies can be had for 25c each. Besides the above-mentioned matter the volume will include George Edgar Montgomery's American Anthem, The Song of the Free; a speech by Gen. L. P. di Cesnola accepting the Memorial on behalf of the trustees of the Museum; and a few words from the veteran actor, John Gilbert, spoken while performing the ceremony of unveiling the marble.—The book is published by subscriptions from the members of the Poe Committee .-Thos. McWatters, Secretary (May 1, 1885)."

360 FROM ARTICLE IN The Theatre, LONDON, FEB. 1, 1881:

"SIX DAYS IN NEW YORK, by Kyrle Bellew:

"On the subject of America's theatres, I cannot help mentioning a comparatively new one, at present under the management of Mr. Steele Mackaye. Hazel Kirke, the piece now running there, has already held the boards for over a year, an abnormally long run in New York. The attraction of the theatre is great as an architectural and constructive curiosity. The many novelties introduced-such as a double stage, the lighting of all gas by electricity, the ventilation, and cooling of air by refrigeration, an orchestra placed above the proscenium, and a dozen others-render the place unique. The saving of labour in this theatre is immense, and the saving of time consequently proportionate. Mr. MacKaye does not raise his curtain until half-past eight, a great boon to late diners. Mr. MacKaye, under whose direction this model theatre has been constructed, is called over there a 'visionary'; he is a visionary, however, who has achieved success. I had the pleasure of being his guest at a supper the night I visited his theatre, and was flattered by receiving an offer of engagement to join his company at once."

367 PREAMBLE OF THE CONTRACT BETWEEN MARSHALL H. MALLORY AND STEELE MACKAYE:

"This memorandum of an agreement, made and concluded on this 1st day of July, in the year 1879, by and between Marshall H. Mallory, the party of the first part, and Steele MacKaye, the party of the second part, witnesseth, that the said parties, in consideration of the covenants and conditions of services and compensation herein expressed, which are to be faithfully kept and performed, by and on the part of each of the said parties respectively, have covenanted and agreed to and with each other as follows:-"

398 FROM Brown's History of the New York Stage: "THE STAR THE-ATRE: 1898":

"Hazel Kirke was seen Sept. 5, 1898, with this cast: Dolly Dutton, Mary Stuart; Mercy Kirke, Lizzie Duroy; Lady Travers, Clara Gisiko; Clara, Edith



BIRTHPLACE OF MARY KEITH MEDBERY (Mrs. Steele Mackaye)
Newburyport, Mass., July 11, 1845. Photograph, 1903; house then unchanged.



BIRTHPLACE OF WILLIAM PAYSON MACKAYE
(Actor, son of Steele MacKaye), 146 East
35th St., New York; Dec. 8, 1868. Home
of Matilda Heron, tragedienne. Photo, 1926;
house then unchanged.



SECOND LONDON HOME OF STEELE MACKAYE AND FAMILY

In Villa of John Ruskin: "The Box,"
7 Love Walk, Denmark Hill, 1873:'74.
Photo, 1904; at gate, Wm. Payson MacKaye, grandson of S. M. (son of Harold).—
cf. p. i, 216.

SOUVENIB, WITH SCRIPT OF STRELE MACKAYE
In the 300th Performance of Hazel Kirke,
MacKaye acted Dunstan. (cf. p. s. 364).
Contained in this leather-bound souvenir were
28 photographs of characters and sceenes in the
play, 9 of which are reproduced on Plate 47,
Chap. XII, Vol. One.





DRINKING FOUNTAIN, UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK

This fountain still stands (1927) opposite 23 Union Square, where Steele MacKaye had his studio, 1877-1880. On its steps, one April dawn, in 1879, Mrs. Steele MacKaye sat, "done with the sleeping tramps," and launched the Madison Square Theutre. Cf. p. i, 302.



at the stockyards, New York, 1875. On moving from 46 E. 10th St., a van-driver (who had worked at the yards), recognizing the portrait, exclaimed to my mother: "Well, if that ain't old Bill himself, I used to hitch by the nosering!" (P. M.K.; cf. p. i, 242.)

HEAD OF BULL, DRAWN BY STEELE MACKAYE,

Gibbons; Arthur Carringford, Basil West; Aaron Rodney, Clifford Pembroke; Pittacus Green, A. Law Gisiko; Met, J. H. Vernon; Barney O'Flynn, William B. Cahill; Joe, Charles Marriott; Dunstan Kirke, C. W. Couldock."

607 Excerpt from a Poem, in the New York Evening Post, April 19, 1881, signed "Lancaster" (dramatic critic):

"TO STEELE MACKAVE

"The quibbling cynic, who has never wrought
Amid the silence sanctified by thought,
Yet keeps in store for every human slip
A shrugging shoulder and a sneering lip,
Listens with smiles sardonically sage
To those who wish to 'elevate the stage' . . .
To put dead forms and usages to rout
And breathe new life, is hard enough, no doubt;
Yet he who lately the dramatic field
Swept with his glance to find what it could yield,
Essayed the task, assumed the cumbrous care,
And reared an unpolluted temple there.

"MacKaye! though consummation may but seem,
And all-completeness be the poet's dream . . .
Not the crowd only, but thy mates and peers,
Welcome the fruitage of thy ripening years,
When youth's fine tendrils, gently brushed away,
Give place to bough and branch of sturdier sway,
And all the forces of thy kindled brain
Bend to the building of some brighter fane.
Or there or here, one wish salutes thee now,
With all the sanctity of friendship's vow;
'Tis that thy future may but match thy past,
And all thy laurels be well 'Won at Last!'"

LETTER FROM KIMBALL AND WISEDELL TO STEELE MACKAYE:
"New York, 824 Broadway, June 16th, 1882. 9:20 p.m.

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"Dear Mr. MacKaye, We send your drawing by messenger boy. We are sorry to disappoint you as to time, but the sketch has taken Mr. Wisedell somewhat longer than he expected.—I think the building, if carried out as here represented, according to your directions, will be all that you desire to have it.—Again expressing our regrets, we are, Very truly yours, Kimball and Wisedell."

Delsarte and MacKaye. (Excerpt from an Article by S. S. Curry, Ph.D., written for *The Voice*, edited by Edgar S. Werner, March, 1885.)

"During my stay in Paris, I studied voice under the illustrious Wachtel; but he, though the brother-in-law of Delsarte, was completely antagonistic to

him and knew nothing of his method. I found much more sympathy and correspondence in principle in my studies with the greatest teacher in voice in Italy, Lamperti, and his pupil, Mr. William Shakespeare, the leading teacher of London, though it was entirely unconscious, as they were not at all acquainted with Delsarte. In an interview with Madame Delsarte she told me that there was no one who knew the principles of her husband theoretically and practically except Mr. MacKaye. Having searched in every avenue, studied with over thirty teachers, spent thousands of dollars, much of it in vain, I came home and began my work with Mr. MacKaye, and I can honestly say that what all the other pupils of Delsarte know put together would not

equal one-fourth the knowledge of Mr. MacKaye.

"But for him Delsarte would never have been known in this country. Indeed, half the work of completely evolving and applying the principles is Mr. Mac-Kaye's own. Some of the exercises and principles are wholly his work. Even while studying with Delsarte, by inventing and applying a special form of exercises, he was enabled to master a series in eleven days, which had taken other pupils six months to master. He has, however, given the whole honour to his old master, whose memory he cherishes with the tenderest affection.—It has been said that Delsarte was much more famous here than in France. True, and why? Because of the wonderful lectures and unparalleled control of body which had been shown by his distinguished pupil. He has made the name of his old master so illustrious that, as is always the case, ignorant persons who were seeking to make money and a name without work, have called themselves 'Delsarteans,' and taught a mass of nonsense which would make Delsarte wild if he were alive. One teacher professes to have procured a great book not yet translated. I need not say that no such book is in existence. Even if there were, any one who attends the exhibition of a lot of pose positions can see at once that the teaching is in direct antagonism to all the principles and methods of Delsarte, for it was always his aim to get at fundamentals, out of which positions will form spontaneously, and one of the worst violations of nature is to externally fix a position for each emotion. This is simply the old elecution. Any one can find these positions (which have lately been exhibited under the name of Delsarte) in Engel or Austin, writers of the last century. It must be said, however, in justice to them, that even the work of these writers has been perverted, and, so far as Delsarte is concerned, they are fundamentally antagonistic.

"Some, who put themselves forth as great expounders of Delsarte, I learn from good authority, have obtained a little smattering from copying the notebooks of Mr. MacKaye's pupils' pupils. These facts came to my knowledge from the rubbish that was printed as 'purely Delsarte.' I was never more surprised in my life, than to find many, who pretend to be expounders of the method, write and say that 'This was essentially the same as their exposition of Delsarte.' I had always thought, not having heard these lectures, that they had studied with Mr. MacKaye or with some of his pupils, and had mastered some of the exercises, and the principles of training which are absolutely necessary for any appreciation of the method.—Something must be done; for, if we have a few more such exhibitions as we have lately had, the whole subject will be brought into such contempt that the cause of reform in

elocution will be lost."

VOLUME TWO

25 Steele MacKaye's Lyceum Theatre School of Acting: (1884-'85). Its continuing function during forty years. A note by Percy MacKaye (Feb., 1927):

The records of this memoir have clarified, for the first time publicly, the origin of systematic dramatic schooling in America, which had its earliest inception in the School of Expression and Acting, projected

by Steele MacKaye, at 46 East 10th St., New York, in 1874-'75, and continued by him, at 23 Union Square, 1877-'80. In 1880-'81, Franklin Sargent studied intensively with MacKaye as his private pupil. In 1884, Steele MacKaye founded his Lyceum Theatre school, with Franklin Sargent as his assistant. In 1885, after MacKaye had severed his connection with the Lyceum Theatre, Sargent became the head of the school and continued it under the names of the Lyceum School of Acting, the Empire Theatre Dramatic School (1897) and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, which is still functioning (1927) in co-operation with Columbia University. Its letter-heads and advertisements to-day, however, give no intimation of its original founding by Steele MacKaye, but convey a quite different impression. This mistake, I have been informed by its present director, Mr. E. E. Diestel, is wholly unintentional and will be corrected.

For forty years this school of the theatre—carried on by the courageous zeal of my father's pupil, Dr. Franklin Sargent,—has maintained its idealistic aims, under the very difficult conditions imposed by the

chaotic commercialism of Broadway.

"From its inception," states its prospectus, "the aim of the Academy has been to present in its public performances the dramatic works of the great writers of all periods, and the hope has been strong that by so doing the Academy could help to cultivate a general and higher conception of the theatre and dramatic art. . . The record of notable plays produced by the Academy includes the works of Molière, Sophocles, Ibsen, Sheridan, Ben Jonson, Congreve, Shakespeare, Goldoni, Racine, Shaw, Gilbert, Maeterlinck, DeMusset, Bjornson, Tolstoi, Rostand, Henry James, Sudermann, Hauptmann, Beaumont and Fletcher, Hervieu, Strindberg, Echegaray, Wiegand, Tom Taylor, Charles Reade, Becque, d'Annunzio, Æschylus."

A list of the former students of the Academy would comprise a large number of American actors who have attained distinction in their profession. The production of American plays has also been a policy of the institution, and thereby the recognition of young native writers. By coincidence it was this school, originally conceived by my father, which produced the very first dramatic work of his son (this biographer) to be acted on Broadway, when—about 1898—Franklin Sargent produced with his pupils, at the Empire Theatre, a play entitled A Maid of Leyden, which I had collaborated with Mrs. Evelyn Greenleaf Sutherland, of Boston, in 1896, when I was a junior at Harvard College.—By the death of Dr. Sargent the theatrical world of education lost a singularly modest and highly informed teacher, whose earnest aims and spirit appear to have been handed on to his associates who have succeeded him.

A LETTER (INCOMPLETE) FROM STEELE MACKAYE TO NATE SALSBURY: Dec. 7, 1886:

"My dear Nate—At last I find time to render you an account of my Stewardship. Long ere this you have doubtless vented your indignation—in the vigorous English for which you are renowned—upon what you suppose to be my extravagance, in so far exceeding the original estimate of preliminary expenses for scenery at the Madison Square Garden.—Observe the facts and

judge;—then, if justice condemns me, do not spare the punishment. The estimate of \$8,500—was based by me upon calculations made by two men reputed to be first-class experts in their business.—I send you a copy of their estimates as I put them down at the time they were made.

Waldron's Estimate for Carpenters and Machine Department:

LABOUR

7 men at \$3.50 per day	\$24.50 12.50
Total daily wages\$37.00 per day for six weeks of six days (the time calculated	\$37.00
enough to complete work) 6 weeks' salary for Waldron at \$40 per week	\$1,332.00 240.00
Total for labour	\$1,572.00
MATERIAL	
Lumber—nails, screws, shives, ropes, etc	\$1,000.00
light	375.00 125.00
Total for materials Total for labour	\$1,500.00 1,572.00
Grand total for Waldron's Department	\$3,072.00
Morgan's Estimate for Scenic Department:	
LABOUR	
7 weeks' salary for Morgan at \$250 per week 3 assistants at \$15, \$25, \$35 per week—aggregate of salaries of assistants—\$75 per week for 6 weeks	\$1,750.00 450.00
Total for labour	\$2,200.00
Canvas	
4 panorama drops containing 280 yards each accreating 1 100	
yards at \$.30	\$336.00
6 borders containing 25 yards each, or 150 yards at \$.30 Sewing for 2,100 yards at \$.05 per yard.	294.00 45.00
width—6 feet—will require no sewing)	105.00
Colors, brushes, glue, etc	500.00
Total for materials	\$1,280.00 2,200.00
Grand total Total for Waldron's estimate Total for Morgan's estimate	\$3,430.00 \$3,072.00 3,480.00
Total for whole work	\$6,552.00

"In asking Estimates of Waldron and Morgan, I enjoined them particularly to make more, rather than less, of the probable cost of the undertaking. receiving their calculations, which were necessarily hurried, as time was short —and a decision at once imperative—I added nearly \$2,000—for contingencies. supposing that amount to be quite sufficient. I think any other man—under the same circumstances—would have agreed with me—and I am still of the opinion that \$8,500 would have paid our preliminary expenses if it had not

been for events which no human intelligence could foresee.

"Before commencing work, I saw Mr. Hyde—the Secretary of the Horse Show—and obtained permission to put in our rigging loft, and our panorama grooves—as when finished they would have been entirely out of sight. With Hyde's consent we commenced work—Waldron and his carpenters at the back of the house: Morgan and his assistants in the large upper hall in the front of the house.-I expected to get rid of carpenters and painters in six weeks from the date of commencing work, and have plenty of time to rehearse the mechanical effects, and the action of the people in combination with them. At first everything progressed beyond our expectations—and I telegraphed you that I thought we would keep well within our estimate. Suddenly Mr. Fellows-the President of the Horse Show-came to inspect the house-while I was away on business with the Building Department. He ordered our men to immediately remove our scaffolding—to stop all work on grooves—to remove our stuff from the Garden at once—and was generally very dictatorial, and evidently highly indignant at our apparent audacity in doing any work in a building rented by his company without the consent of that company.

"When I returned I found men idle-work stopped and consternation generally prevailing. I sought out Mr. Fellows, and after many tedious and irritating experiences, I succeeded in securing an interview with the outraged President. I then learned that Hyde had never reported his permission to us to go on, and that moreover Hyde had no right to give any permission without the consent of the President. As Hyde was the only one we could ever find in the offices of the Horse Show Co. downtown, and as he assumed the right to permit us to proceed, we did not suspect or question his authority, and hastened to get to work. When Mr. Fellows learned that I had taken the trouble to find Hyde—and no slight, or neglect, of him was intended, he was mollified, and condescended to appoint an hour the next day when he would call at the Garden and decide exactly what he would permit us to do. Mean-

time most of our work was stopped, and serious delays began.

"Mr. Fellows kept his appointment, bringing with him a small army of objecting associates-all of whom had to be conciliated in order to get the chance to go on with anything at that time. Finally we obtained permission to finish our panorama grooves, but were forbidden to proceed with our rigging loft until after the Horse Show had closed. We were also ordered to get out of the large upper hall where we were painting our scenery. We found it impossible, after days of endeavor, to find a place to paint in except away off in Flushing, L. I., where at last we did succeed in getting one frame, and where we sent the carpenters, building our set pieces, and the painters that were to paint them.—This interference with us long before the Horse Show commenced, and the Show itself, virtually deprived us of at least three weeks of legitimate work which I had calculated in doing during the daytime—and at day pay in the Garden. The result of this was a frantic rush to get open for Thanksgiving Day. We were obliged to increase our force of carpenters immensely, and to work them nights and Sundays at double pay. We were also obliged to get four new and expensive scene painters, to assist Morgan to complete his work in time—viz.—Harley Merry,—Tryon, Weston—and Heineman. To add to our misery. . . ."

(Note: The rest of this letter has not been preserved.)

EXCERPT FROM Reminiscences of a Showman, BY LOUIS COOKE, Newark, N. J., Evening Star, July 1, 1915, concerning The Drama OF CIVILIZATION:

"The scenes that were painted to cover the different epochs of American history began with the primeval forest, which was first disclosed when the curtain rose showing the blue dawn in a dense forest, with the birds warbling in the trees and the sun gleaming gradually at the break of day. The first animal life to be seen was a herd of real mountain elk, which came bounding on the real turf that formed the stage; these animals would stop, look around, surveying the scene, frequently ploughing the earth with their horns and assuming natural playful attitudes, their eyes glistening in the artificial sunlight like diamonds, only to be disturbed by the pursuit of the savages wrapped in the skins of the animals which they had killed.

"Following this introduction came the meeting of friendly tribes of redskins in the wilderness, their greetings to be interrupted by hostiles from other tribes, who entered into hand-to-hand conflicts with the bow and arrow and other weapons used before firearms were invented. We next saw the same forest cleared up, with the cabin-home of the frontiersman in the foreground, while further back, in full view, was the pioneer sowing his seed with open hand and harrowing the ground with real cattle, horses and implements such as were used in the early days. This peaceful scene was destroyed by skulking savages, who swarmed from the underbrush and attacked, killed or carried off

their captives.

"The next epoch showed the pioneers wending their way west across the plains, with all the incidents of that time and period fully illustrated. The immigrant train was brought into play: the old stage coach and the sports and pastimes of the plains, which all who have visited the Buffalo Bill Show have, since that time, become quite familiar with. This scene culminated with one of the most realistic prairie fires that has ever been artificially presented, where we saw a real stampede of horses, cattle, buffalo, elk and deers, rushing madly across the plains. This followed the Indian war dance, the frontier battle scenes, with appropriate surroundings.—The next epoch revealed the mining camps in the mountains, illustrating the methods of mining and the quarters of the U. S. troops who acted as guards in those days. Here was introduced one of the most effective cyclones that has ever been staged; bringing into play the steam supplied from across the street for batteries of four six-foot exhaust fans, such as are used in forcing air into mines and other deep cavities."

129 NAMES SIGNED TO THE INVITATION, FROM BUFFALO CITIZENS, TO

STEELE MACKAYE (MAY, 1887):

"Hon. Philip Becker (Mayor of Buffalo); Hon. Loran L. Lewis (Supreme Court Justice); Hon. C. Beckwith (Judge); Hon. Edward W. Hatch (Judge); Hon. Jacob Stern (Surrogate); J. H. Carmichael; J. E. Ewell; Robert Preston Wilson; Frank T. Gilbert; Schlund and Doll; Wm. C. Green; Perry C. Rayburn; Frank F. Williams; G. W. Wende; J. S. Minton; Horace J. Harvey; Edward G. Hawley; S. M. Ratcliffe, Jr.; Henry W. Sprague; U. S. Johnson; Joseph L. Fairchild; Edwin F. Bishop; Frank M. Loomis; Otto W. Volger; Moses Shire; Joseph E. Barnard; W. F. Worthington; D. E. Morgan; Nathaniel Brown; C. G. Crittenden; E. W. Evans; D. W. Hartnett; Leonard Dodge; E. More; J. N. Adams; F. N. Wallace; Frederick Truscott; S. F. Sherman; Wm. W. Sloan; T. V. Dickinson; Henry Altman; H. B. Moore; A. Cutler & Son; Stafford and Faul; Irish & English; T. L. McMullen; A. J. Wright; Henry D. Waters; Henry S. Sill; C. L. Abel; T. Mason Mitchell, Jr.; D. M. Welch; F. J. Henry; Warren F. Chandler; E. B. Wilbur; Irlacker & Davis; Wm. B. Hawkins; A. Hauck; A. O. Crissey; H. G. Nolton; H. C. French; Robert M. Codd; Milton E. Beebe; D. W. Bennett; J. A. Campbell; Geo. Loveridge; John C. Boyd; Edgar B. Jewett; W. J. Zimmerman; Thomas Cary Welch; W. S. Thompson; Geo. C. H. Donald; Edward P. Harris; W. H. Hoyt; C. F. Bingham; O. N. Crandall; Geo. W. Rockwell; John F. Moulton; Mm. Adams; S. A. Wheeler; T. A. Bissel; John B. Sage; Frank L. Danforth; Chas. Clifton; G. E. Nillson; H. S. Guthrie; N. C. Simonds; Chas. M. Mack; Frank A. Pierce; J. A. Seymond, Jr.; T. L. Wadsworth; Wm. Petire; W. I. Babcock; F. A. Jewett; A. J. Packard; Charles A. Gould; John A. Hollaway;

C. T. Sternberg; Geo. Alfred Stringer; W. H. Sherman; Edward L. Davis; S. Levyn; and over one thousand other leading citizens of Buffalo.

JOHN CRAIG, ON THE MOBS OF Julius Casar and Paul Kauvar:

Note: In a matinee benefit to Tony Hart, at the Academy of Music, March 15, 1888, in the warning and assassination scenes of "Julius Casar." Steele MacKaye acted Metellus, and provided super-numeraries for the Roman Mob from his "Sans Culottes" mob of Paul Kauvar, among them John Craig, later noted as actor-manager. Others in the cast were: Julius Casar, Charles Kent; Brutus, William H. Crane; Cassius, Stuart Robson; Decius, Henry Bergman; Flavius, Francis Wilson; Soothsayer, J. B. Mason; Casca, Frank Mayo; Trebonius, Osmond Tearle; Popillius, Robert E. Hilliard.

For June 6, 1927 (85th anniversary of Steele MacKaye's birth), a production of "Julius Cæsar" has been projected by the Players, New York, under direction of Mr. John Craig, who—on inviting me to participate in the mob, with MacKayes of a second and third generation (my children, Arvia and Keith)—related how my father had invited him, with other "Sans Culottes" of the Paul Kauvar mob, to participate in the mob of Julius Casar, for the above-mentioned Tony Hart benefit. Apropos of those memories, he wrote to me, from the Players, May 17, 1927, the following letter:

"My dear Percy MacKaye: I have many delightful remembrances of your father, when I made my début in Paul Kauvar as one of the mob at the old Standard Theatre. He called us 'his boys' and took a personal interest in every one of us. I have a lively recollection of his singling me out personally (rendering me almost paralyzed with self-consciousness), to show me some special business, of tearing down curtains and stripping our side of the wall, that we 'Sans Culottes' were supposed to do. He used to tell us we would all be fine actors, some day, if we did our 'super' work with care

and intelligence.

"Paul Kauvar was a wonderful play and has always lived in my memory. The impression it made on me—a boy of nineteen—has never been effaced. Years later in Boston, where I became an actor-manager, I acted the part of Paul (the week of Jan. 14, 1901, at the Castle Square Theatre, where Edmund Breese played Guroc and Charles Mackay, Delaroche). I can even now repeat many of the scenes, line for line. In 1887-'88, at New York, what a cast we had:—Joseph Haworth, Annie Robe, Wilton Lackaye, Robert Hilliard, Edwin Varrey, George Fawcett! I remember one night, when Haworth was ill, your father went on for Paul and played the part magnificently. He was truly a many-sided man: more than kind, more than a genius, one who loved and helped the struggling actor and laboured only for the higher and better things of his profession.—Sincerely, John Craig."

STATEMENT BY J. RANKEN TOWSE, DRAMATIC CRITIC (for fifty-three years) of the New York Evening Post, written by him from 555 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, N. Y., to Percy MacKaye, at Windsor, Vermont, 7th June, 1926.

"Steele MacKaye-actor, manager, dramatist, inventor, enthusiastwas an all-round man, the type of player, now almost extinct, of which the contemporary theatre stands in most urgent need. He not only loved his profession, many players do that, but had in it that genuine pride that made him jealous of its dignity and keenly appreciative of its highest artistic functions and possibilities. For the stage, in all its departments, he had a comprehensive ability which was closely akin to positive genius.—As an actor, he was of the first order of intelligence, and in his expressive face, fine figure and carriage, possessed physical advantages of the most valuable sort. Moreover, he was a diligent student of the artistic principles of histrionism. In comedy, romance and melodrama his acting was marked by uncommon individuality, vigor and finish.

"His zeal, inventiveness and adaptability were all strikingly displayed during the period of his direction of the Madison Square Theatre, which owed to him much of its fame and prosperity. He won distinction there, not only as the author of Hazel Kirke, one of the most successful plays of modern times, but as a stage manager of rare taste and skill and an actor of unusual versatility and power. It was largely owing to his initiative that the earliest experiments with the double and revolving stages were made in this city, and he was also the inventor of a collapsible orchestra chair, which, possibly on account of the cost, did not win general managerial favour, but which, there is good reason for believing, might have greatly facilitated the exit of a crowded audience. He was expert in all matters pertaining to the theatre, before and behind the scenes.

"His intense interest in the theatre and everything pertaining to it, his familiarity with his subject, his kindly, sanguine, but excitable temperament, his idealism—often somewhat fanciful and impracticable—his conversational gifts, including a fine talent for polished invective, made him a most attractive companion. He had a lofty contempt for what was base or foolish and spoke with a free tongue. So if he had many friends and admirers he was not without his enemies. He has never yet received in full the public recognition to which his abilities and his character entitled him.—(Signed) J. RANKEN TOWSE."

WHILE PREPARING (AT SHIRLEY CENTER, MASS., IN THE SPRING OF 1892) her article for Werner's Voice Magazine (published therein, July, 1892), Mrs. Steele MacKaye conferred, regarding it, with WILLIAM R. ALGER, who wrote her the following Letter, dated, "6 Brimmer St., Boston, April 24th, 1892":

"My dear Mrs. MacKaye:

"Colonel MacKaye paid the whole 5000 francs for the Delsarte manuscripts. (I had intended to pay it, but was in the hospital and unable to do so.) These papers were in my possession for some months and during that time May Monroe and myself read some of them.—What was sent to Delsarte as the result of the MacKaye lectures was his sole offering, no one else adding anything to it.—The article in the Transcript on Mr. MacKaye's first lecture was written by Mr. Whipple.

"The statement you propose to publish is needed. I shall be happy to aid you in any way I can. Come and spend the day with us and we will consider the whole thing carefully, in the light of what you shall have written.—Let me know a day or two in advance, that I may be sure to be at home.—

Affectionately your friend, Wm. R. Alger."

275 STATEMENT BY RUTH ST. DENIS, ON THE INFLUENCE OF STEELE MACKAYE:

NOTE: The following statement by Miss St. Denis—for its tokens of the extended influences of Steele MacKaye's life and art—may appropriatly be compared with another kindred statement by Miss Mary Shaw, on page 63 of this volume.

"Great Northern Hotel, May 15, 1927.

"Dear Percy MacKaye: The first lessons I have ever received in body control and body culture were indirectly, but nevertheless in spirit, from the 'Delsarte' teachings of your great father, that remarkable man whose whole being was so alive to beauty and its uses. It seems that my mother (we were then living on a country farm in New Jersey) went on a visit to New Haven and there met a Madame Poté. Madame Poté stated that she was a

student and teacher of 'Delsarte,' she having received her training from one who in her turn was a pupil of your father's; so, you see, I feel as though I were at least an artistic grandchild of Steele MacKaye. My mother became so enthusiastic over the new visions of the beauty and artistic use of the body which Mme. Poté gave her, that she rushed home and poured her tale into my youthful ears. We both began at once to do the exercises which Madame had prescribed, and read and reread the little booklet which she

had given us

"These my first lessons I am sure were both superficial and attenuated, yet—as brief as they were and as little understood—they had in them so much of your father's magic, that they had power to start a whole life career. During all of these after years of my own dancing life, grown from and built upon the foundation of my mother's enthusiasm in those simple lessons of 'Delsarte,' I have felt that there would come a time when I would be privileged to bear a message of Truth and Beauty to America.—Ted Shawn and I have borne and nursed an American School and Theatre of the Dance, to a certain stage of development, and if in the flowering of this development, encouraged and supported by our talented, devoted and faithful helpers, we can feel that in a measure we have helped to bring to fruition some of the dreams and principles of Steele MacKaye's great message, we shall be made doubly happy.—No great art of the Theatre can be built on any foundation that does not contain a deep understanding of the law of correspondence between emotion and motion, thought and gesture, spirit and form. Surely the necessity and vitality of the Theatre is that its expression shall be a great synthesis; and where should that synthesis begin as cornerstone and foundation, but in the understanding of the correlation, co-ordination, and control of the body?—Ruth St. Denis."

FINANCIAL REPORT (PROBABLE DATE, FEB., 1893) BY STEELE MACKAYE TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COLUMBIAN CELEBRATION COMPANY:*

"Gentlemen: Herewith, I submit the following report of the probable cost complete for the construction of 'The MacKaye Spectatorium,' and of its accessory buildings; also the probable expense of producing *The World Finder*, the spectatorio with which 'The MacKaye Spectatorium' is to be opened to the public.

CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT

"The MacKaye Spectatorium"	Full amount		On time
(Contractor's estimate)	\$470,000	\$400,000	\$70,000
Studios, Power, Engine, Machinery Houses and			
Terrace	. 40,000	20,000	20,000
err i a			
Total	s \$510,000	\$420,000	\$90,000

^{*} Of the Columbian Celebration Company Murray Nelson was President and Sidney C. White, Jr., was Secretary.

EQUIPMENT OF BUILDING

(To be paid for by leasing system)

\$35,000

\$10,000

\$25,000

Machinery for moving stages with engines.

machinery for moving stages with engines	\$55,000		\$20,000		
1200 H. P. power plant, boilers	12,000		12,000		
Electrical plant	40,000		40,000		
Stages with foundation rails, trucks, etc	60,000		20,000		
Engines for electric plant	5,000		5,000		
Water plant—pumps for current maker—rain,			0,000		
		7.050	7.050		
etc., with engine	2,500	1,250	1,250		
Wind plant for cyclone and ventilation with					
engines	20,000		20,000		
Rain and fog plant	2,000	1,000	1,000		
Chimney (Contracted for)	2,370	2,370			
Standpipes and fire escapes	10,000	5,000	5,000		
Furniture for building	5,000	2,500	2,500		
Seats	15,000	_,	15,000		
Plumbing	10,000	5,000	5,000		
Grading and gardening	5,000	2,500	2,500		
Sundries	10,000	5,000			
Dunation (111111111111111111111111111111111111	10,000	9,000	5,000		
Totals	9099 070	Ø7 4 000	Φ3. E0. O E0.		
Totals	\$233,870	\$74,620	\$150,250		
PRODUCTION OF "THE WORLD FINDER" (To be charged to the Running Expense Account)					
		count)			
(To be charged to the Running E	Expense Ac	· ·			
(To be charged to the Running E		· ·	On time		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction	Expense Ac	t In adv.			
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction	Expense Ac	In adv. \$55,000	\$20,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc	Expense Activation Full amount \$75,000 20,000	t In adv. \$55,000 15,000			
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc Managerial Expenses—past Managerial Expenses—Future (till opening)	Expense Activation Full amount \$75,000 20,000 37,204	t In adv. \$55,000 15,000 37,204	\$20,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc Managerial Expenses—past Managerial Expenses—Future (till opening)	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000	t In adv. \$55,000 15,000 37,204 25,000	\$20,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000 15,000	t In adv. \$55,000 15,000 37,204 25,000 15,000	\$20,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000	t In adv. \$55,000 15,000 37,204 25,000	\$20,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction	Expense Acceptage Acceptag	In adv. \$55,000 15,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000	\$20,000 5,000		
(To be charged to the Running E. Stage properties, Scenery & Construction	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000 published	\$55,000 15,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000 statements)	\$20,000 5,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc Managerial Expenses—past Managerial Expenses—Future (till opening) Publicity Department * The final cost of this model (from later about \$30,000. School	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000 published \$5,000	**Tin adv. \$55,000	\$20,000 5,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc Managerial Expenses—past Managerial Expenses—Future (till opening) Publicity Department Model* * The final cost of this model (from later about \$30,000. School Rehearsals	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 published \$5,000 15,000	\$55,000 15,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000 statements)	\$20,000 5,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc Managerial Expenses—past Managerial Expenses—Future (till opening) Publicity Department * The final cost of this model (from later about \$30,000. School	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000 published \$5,000	**Tin adv. \$55,000	\$20,000 5,000		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc Managerial Expenses—past Managerial Expenses—Future (till opening). Publicity Department Model* * The final cost of this model (from later about \$30,000. School Rehearsals Sundries	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000 published \$5,000 15,000 5,000	\$5,000 15,000 25,000 15,000 20,000 \$tatements) \$5,000 15,000 2,500	\$20,000 5,000 reached		
(To be charged to the Running E Stage properties, Scenery & Construction Costumes, armor, etc Managerial Expenses—past Managerial Expenses—Future (till opening) Publicity Department Model* * The final cost of this model (from later about \$30,000. School Rehearsals	Expense Ac Full amoun \$75,000 20,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 published \$5,000 15,000	\$55,000 15,000 37,204 25,000 15,000 20,000 \$tatements)	\$20,000 5,000 reached		

379 THE SPECTATORIUM BUILDING AND "SKY-SCRAPER" CONSTRUCTION: A NOTE BY THE BIOGRAPHER.

Major W. Le Baron Jenney, of the Chicago firm of Jenney and Mundie, who constructed the Spectatorium according to the designs of Steele MacKaye, was afterwards known among architects as "the father of the modern sky-scraper."

SUMMARY

\$510,000 \$420,000

74,620

75,000

189,704

233,870

75,000

217,204

Totals \$1,036,074 \$759,324

\$90,000

159,250

27,500

\$276,750

Construction Department

Cost of Equipment

Production of The World Finder.....

Lease of the Land....

The construction of the immense structure, the Spectatorium (compared to the Eiffel Tower: cf. p. ii, 380) presented, in 1892-'93, unprecedented problems, and for the history of American architecture it is interesting to note the peculiar transitional stage of development in the art, which utilized enormous thickness of wooden walls (23 feet thick) for the support of the thousand tons of steel construction in the roofing.

These problems must undoubtedly have been the occasion of intensive conferences between Steele MacKaye and Major Jenney, particularly enhanced by the serious accident to the roofing construction, caused by a small cyclone in the early spring of 1893 (cf. p. ii, 397). In view of the fact that not long after such conferences between MacKaye and Jenney, the latter perfected those innovating methods of building known as "sky-scraper" construction, and in view of the total record of Steele MacKaye as a maker of innovations, it is interesting to consider the historic possibility that the inventive ideas of Steele MacKaye may have helped to perfect the solution of sky-scraper construction which, after his death, was first practically exemplified to the public by Major Jenney, who was one of the builders of the Spectatorium.

406 THE SPECTATORIUM: ITS INCORPORATORS AND SOME INVESTORS: Statement quoted from the Pittsburgh Dispatch, Feb. 28, 1894:

"Steele MacKaye, ex-Congressman Ben Butterworth, Powell Crosley, Sidney C. White, Jr., and Howard O. Edmunds were the incorporators of the company. It was capitalized at \$2,000,000, and first mortgage bonds to the extent of \$800,000 were issued. Of these \$553,000 were subscribed for.—Stock was sold at \$1,000 per share, and among the prominent people who invested in the enterprise were: George M. Pullman, Murray Nelson, E. L. Brewster, Edson Keith, John Cudahy, Lyman J. Gage, C. J. and F. W. Peck, H. E. Bucklen, ten shares each.—Others interested from two to five shares were: F. H. Head, C. H. Deere, Arthur Dixon, J. J. Mitchell, E. H. Phelps, F. G. Logan, N. R. Ream, David Henderson, A. C. McClurg, Andrew McNally and P. W. Studebaker."

406 STATEMENT BY MURRAY NELSON, IN THE CHICAGO NEWS, JUNE 13, 1893:

"When I put my money in the Spectatorium," said Mr. Murray Nelson, "I was not at all sure that I should get it out. Yes, I gave all of my time to it, as Vice President, and all of my son's time. Many of the investors put money into it as a philanthropic enterprise, not knowing or caring much whether they ever got it back or not.—This was to have been a great educational institution, and we intended to establish, in connection with it, a permanent school of fine arts, for instruction in the dramatic art, music, dancing, etc.—We intended to have the ballet taught—not a ballet of legs, but as it was in the ancient courts. We would probably have been successful in our projects, if it had not been for the stringent conditions in the financial market."

447 ELWYN A. BARRON, DRAMATIC CRITIC OF THE CHICAGO INTER OCEAN was also a successful playwright: the author (jointly with Morgan Bates) of A Mountain Pink, in the first production of which Louise Sylvester was star. In 1926, Mr. Barron wrote to me:—

"A Mountain Pink rambled about the country, from New York to San Francisco, with three different stars successfully, for about fifteen years—and all

the authors got out of it, in bankable material, was about \$5000. The makers of plays have learned wisdom since those days, though I believe Bartley Campbell was the first to profit by the rule of continued ownership and ascending percentages. He told me, over a negus, that, in Paris, a French dramatist had taught him practical methods, and he avowed: 'I'll never sell another play.'-His first play, on the new scheme, was My Geraldine, from which he made \$80,000, in one season."

In 1926, I learned for the first time (through finding the carbon copy of a letter from my father to Barron, in 1894) concerning the high-hearted support of my father's Spectatorium publicly expressed by Elwyn Barron during the darkest hours of its catastrophe. Immediately through my friend, Oliver Herford, of the Players, I was very fortunate in securing the address of Mr. Barron, to whom I wrote an expression of feeling appreciation from myself and all my father's family. In reply Mr. Barron wrote to me, from Kansas City, Mo., April 25, 1926:

"Dear Mr. MacKaye:

"In these days of my pilgrimage through the shadowland of an ill-health that lays a heavy tax on the finer activities of mind, it is impossible for me to put into words the appreciative sentiments quickened by your deeply gratifying letter . . . prompted by a quality of devotion which made you eager, after more than thirty years, to express your gratitude for an attempted service to your father in his tragic period of mental and physical agony. This fine expression of your feeling is of many, many times greater value and true significance to me than could have been anything you, or any member of your family, might have written a generation ago,—and for that reason I am glad you learned only recently that your father believed I had done him

"Let me assure you, however, that neither then (nor at any time since) the idea that that any one owed me acknowledgment suggested itself. I had great admiration of Steele MacKaye-his vigorous genius, his bold ideals, his fine fancy, the candor and freedom of his inventive mind,—properties often misunderstood and misjudged by his less intelligent contemporaries. I wrote from a sense of righteous wrath against the wrong and injustice done him when illness beat him down and wrecked what would else have proved an artistic triumph. All I sought to do was to give the misjudging a right and just understanding of the Man and his Purpose. To the extent that I succeeded in that I was satisfied to have no other testimony than your father's letters appreciating the effort. . . . I can imagine how great the task of your biography has been; but as a labour of love it will, I'm sure, bear no evidence of wearied mind or faltering heart. . . .

"I sincerely thank you for your gracious and charming letter. If I had access to masses of my stuff stored in Boston, I might a little repay you with a satirically humorous letter your father wrote me, some ages ago, anent my comment on the unexplained disappearance from one of his plays of a character prominent in early scenes. I wish for you the full realization of your

dearest artistic hopes and aims.—Cordially yours, Elwyn A. Barron."

THIS IS THE LAST STANZA OF STEELE MACKAYE'S Trust Choral, 461 WRITTEN BY HIMSELF:

> "To all true souls, who trust and wait, God's will a strength doth lend To meet life's test, however great Its power to break or bend,

So blest are those whose trust, steadfast,
Outlives the storm and night,
For they will surely see at last
The triumph of the right."

To the composer of the music, Frederick Archer, my father wrote (Nov. 16, '93):—"This choral is sung at night, when the stars are shining serenely in the heavens, just after Columbus has been warned by his friends that his life is in danger.—I shall be gratified if you will compose music expressing the celestial calm, peace and strength of this moment."—At that moment, Steele MacKaye himself had been warned by his friends that his own life was in danger. He lived but three months longer.

During a venturesome and varied career as journalist and editor, Arthur Loring MacKaye has resided in New York, California and Hawaii. In New York City, for nine years, he was Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the New York Press Club.—In Los Angeles (1901-1910) he served editorially on the Los Angeles Record and Times. In Hawaii, he was editor of the Honolulu Advertiser (1911-'14), and editor of the Hilo Daily Tribune (1914-'16).—Returning to California, under severe duress of long sustained illness, borne with a buoyant courage, he has recently completed a novel on old Hellenic life, The Slave Prince (L. H. Page, Boston, 1926).

The only son of Arthur Loring MacKaye is David Loring MacKaye (named for his great, great grandfather). Born in Brooklyn, N. Y., Feb. 15, 1890, he has had an enterprising life as journalist, soldier and teacher. He was a captain in the Great War, while stationed at Fort Shafter, near Honolulu, and was adjutant in First Hawaiian Regiment, U. S. A.—At Honolulu, T. H., in August, 1909, he was married to Miss Anna Virginia Trook, of Arizona, grandniece of President William Henry Harrison. Their children are David Steele, Mary Loring, and Martin.

Some Records of the Children and Descendants of Steele Mac-Kaye and Mary Medbery MacKaye, in sequence of seniority, are as follows:

Harold Steele MacKaye (Columbia, 1887), novelist and patent attorney, author of *The Panchronicon*, *The Winged Helmet*, *Lucinda's Whim*, etc., is recorded in "Who's Who in America," Vol XI. Of his novel *The Panchronicon* The Outlook wrote (May 21, 1904):

"This is an irresistibly funny book, hardly surpassed by Stockton's happiest conceits. The Panchronicon is a wonderful Yankee invention, a machine for ærial navigation by means of which, with proper adjustment and manipulation, the operator and his friends are able to fly westward through space, "cuttin' meridians" at the pole in a sufficient number of revolutions to place them all back in time as many years as may be desired. They choose to alight in England in the days of Queen Elizabeth, who is addressed as "Miss Tudor" by one of the voyagers, an elderly spinster from Peltryville, New Hampshire. The resulting situations are all mirth-compelling."

Harold's son, his only child, William Payson MacKaye* (named for his

^{*}He was married, September 15, 1917, at Bangor, Maine, to Miss Katharine Nealley, of that city. Their children are James Stewart (a budding "Prince of Denmark," at eight) and William Payson MacKaye, Junior (his brother's "impresario," at six).

uncle), soon after his studies at Cornell University, entered the business of fine printing in New York City, where his inventive gifts as designer and writer have expressed themselves in a series of admirable brochures and other publications. He is also active there as a member of the Veteran Corps of Artillery, State of New York.

William Payson MacKaye, actor, artist, poet (Dec. 8, 1868—Jan. 22, 1889): This most gifted son of Steele MacKaye, on his death at twenty, left behind him writings of extraordinary promise, in poems, plays, essays, tales, etc., aggregating about 100,000 words (put in typed form by this biographer, when a boy), besides many sketchbooks of his imaginative drawings. His acting rôles (in which he used the stage names—"William Payson," William MacKaye, and Payson MacKaye) were as follows:

- 1885, April 6—Callboy for Impresario Kraft (acted by Richard Mansfield) in In Spite of All by Steele MacKaye, at Lyceum Theatre, with Minnie Maddern in the chief rôle. Management of Steele MacKaye.
- 1885, Nov. 10—A Servant in One of our Girls by Bronson Howard, with Miss Helen Dauvray, management of John Rickaby, Lyceum Theatre. (Ran 200 nights, closing May 22, '86; reopened, Lyceum Theatre, Dec. 6, '86).
- 1886, Dec. 20—A Servant in A Scrap of Paper, Miss Dauvray's Company, with E. H. Sothern, management of Daniel Frohman.
- 1887, Jan. 11—Burdock, an old retainer, in Met by Chance by Bronson Howard, Lyceum Theatre (see page ii, 55).
- 1887, Jan. 31—A small part in Masks and Faces by Charles Reade, Lyceum Theatre.
- 1887, Mar. 7-Vladimir in Walda Lamar, Lyceum Theatre.
- 1887, Mar. 23-Neville in The Love Chase, Lyceum Theatre.
- 1887, Sept. 19—A Detective in Editha's Burglar with E. H. Sothern, Lyceum Theatre.
- 1887, Dec. 7—Pierre Frochard in The Two Orphans, leading man, in Kate Claxton's Company, New York, and on tour.
- 1888, Oct.-Dec.—Harold Vernon in The World Against Her, with Kate Claxton and Charles A. Stevenson, Brooklyn and on tour in South.
- 1889, Jan.—The same, at Brooklyn, in early January. He died Jan. 22, 1889. Cf. Index of "Epoch."

James (Medbery) MacKaye (Harvard, 1895), author of *The Economy of Happiness*, *The Logic of Conduct*, etc., is recorded in "Who's Who in America." Cf. Index. Also *Natl. Cyclopaedia of Amer. Biography*, Vol. XIV, Sup. I, 1910.

Percy (Wallace) MacKaye (Harvard, 1897), poet and dramatist is recorded in "Who's Who."—Commentaries upon his work (partially in relation to that of Steele MacKaye) are given in *The American Dramatist*, by Montrose J. Moses (Little, Brown); Representative American Plays, by Arthur H. Quinn (Century Co.); Chief Contemporary

Dramatists, by Thomas H. Dickinson (Houghton, Mifflin); Playwrights of the New American Theatre, by T. H. Dickinson (Macmillan); An Outline of Contemporary Drama, by T. H. Dickinson (Houghton, Mifflin); Representative Plays by American Dramatists, by Montrose J. Moses. In greeting to his fiftieth birthday (March 16, 1925), an American Symposium of fifty of his fellow-writers includes an estimate of his work, written by Amy Lowell, a few weeks before her death, in that year.—A sketch of his life (with detailed bibliography of his works) is contained in the Class Report (1922) of the Harvard College Class of 1897. Cf. also Natl. Cycl. of Amer. Biog., Vol. XIV, Sup. I, 1910.

Benton MacKaye (Harvard, 1900), regional planner and forest engineer, author of *Employment and Natural Resources*, *The New Exploration*, etc., is recorded in "Who's Who in Engineering." (Cf. page ii, 474, and Index.)

Hazel MacKaye (Radcliffe College), actress, pageant-writer and director, author of *The Quest of Youth*, etc., is recorded in "Who's Who in America." Cf. Index.

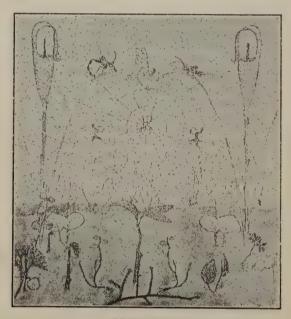
An estimate of her public career has recently been expressed by her fellow-worker, Mrs. Roland Holt (née Constance d'Arcy Mac-Kay*), whose significant experience in related creative labours has provided her, for some years, with first-hand knowledge in the inclusive field of theatre and community life, wherein she bases her judgment

expressed in the following statement from her pen:

"The debt that American Pageantry owes to Hazel MacKave can never be fully evaluated in its true significance because the results of her work have been so wide-spread, and so far-reaching, North, South, East, West. Fine as Hazel MacKaye's work has been in play-producing, writing, and as dramatic consultant, it is as a pageant-dramatist and producer that she won her permanent place in the annals of the American theatre.—Like her father and her brothers, she is a pioneer. She was the first one to conceive the pageant as a biographical dramatic form. Her Susan B. Anthony Pageant in Washington, D. C., and her Inez Milholland Memorial Pageant in New York State are cases in point. She was the first artist to dream what the steps and porticoes of public buildings might mean as outdoor stages for beautiful, impressive ceremonials, and made that dream a fact with her unforgetable Suffrage Allegory on the steps of the Treasury at Washington, D. C. She was the first woman to produce an industrial pageant (Buffalo, N. Y., 1916). Indeed she has made amazingly versatile contributions to every type of pageant—the historical, the allegorical, the religious, and the educational.

^{*} Constance d'Arcy MacKay, though not of immediate kin relationship with Hazel MacKaye, shares descent from the same MacAoidh of old clan legend referred to in the Prologue of this memoir. The fancy, charm and integrity of her works, in drama and pageant, have won the regard of her national public. Wife of the widely-known New York publisher and dramatic critic, Roland Holt, she is the author of numerous volumes recorded in "Who's Who in America."

"Her production of Vassar's 50th Anniversary Pageant is held as the finest pageant achievement of that college. And here is a salient fact: whatever college or community her work has touched has instantly and permanently moved to a higher level of dramatic effort. This has been due not only to the force of her own irradiating personality, her power to enthuse youth; but to her gifts as a theatre-worker. Her initial training and practical experience on the professional stage have lent to her productions the technical sureness, the sweep, the colour that is forever inseparable from the best things of the theatre. As The American Magazine of Art has lately said: 'All the past work of Hazel MacKaye will be used as a vast laboratory for what she is planning for the future, for she belongs by inheritance, by training, and by imaginative grasp, to those who have made and will further make dramatic history.'"



PRIMAVERA

Some Extensions of Steele Mackaye's Art-Life in a Third Gen-ERATION: A Note by the Biographer.

Creation in the life of art is an ever-recurring renewal—out of the Before and Beyond. As the works of my own dream-life had in vital measure their source and earliest opportunity of growth in my father's dreams and labours for the theatre's art, so in like regard that extension of his creative life has taken, from labours of my own, renewed and definite forms of expression in the growing life-work of my children. My father's Spectatorio, The World Finder, gave me my first discipline and opportunity of public expression in the theatre's art; so my Masque, Caliban, gave to my son, Robert Keith MacKaye, and to his sister, Arvia, their first analogous opportunity and remembered tutelage in phases of a large-scale production; since when (after—as in my own case—some years of college life in Cambridge), they have begun to dedicate themselves to a self-chosen apprenticeship in forms of an old art-synthesis, freshly scanned with the zest of individual freedom and initiative. In Caliban, also,—the English folk-dance Interlude—their younger sister, Christy, made her first appearance at the age of six.

Robert Keith MacKaye * is pursuing some family quarries in art and philosophy.—A drawing by him (Shine and Shadow) is included on page 157, of this volume. He has also drawn the accompanying design (Primavera),—a prelude to this "Third Generation" note. As a boy, at Dublin, N. H., he lived one summer with Abbott Thayer and studied painting and natural history with him and his son Gerald Thayer. As a Harvard Senior, he (with his classmate, John Edsall, in '23), was one of a student group that started a new magazine, The Gad-Fly, which was satirized for its "non-conforming" ideas by a special edition of the Harvard Lampoon. Since then he has outlined an Opus I of his own philosophy, Our Creative Self. Concerning this work in manuscript, the following are three excerpts from letters written to its young author: the first by President C. C. Little, of the University of Michigan; the second by Dr. Edwin E. Slosson, author of Creative Chemistry; the third by Wm. E. Hocking, Professor of Philosophy at

Harvard:

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(1) "I think your general idea is absolutely sound. The whole manuscript

is full of a great deal of originality and may well be used as an interesting philosophical basis for many of our social and biological problems."

(2) "The manuscript is characterized by original thinking and picturesque presentation. In this age of flabby thinking and dissipated attention, it is gratifying to meet a young man who thinks out his own philosophy of the gratifying the definite form. It will constitute a constitute as the first of the state o world in such definite form. It will constitute a constructive system that will be of value to yourself through all the years to come, whatever may be its reception by the world at large."

^{*} Jean (Brewster MacKaye), the daughter of Robert Keith MacKaye and Lavinia Gould MacBride (University of Michigan, A.M.) was born December 28, 1924. To her—little "Jean of Honey Holler"—I have recently been privileged to dedicate my latest book, Tall Tales of the Kentucky Mountains. To her sister, Nancy-Lavinia (Steele),—born in New Haven, April 30, 1927,—Epoch makes its bow in tributary page-proofs.

(3) "I am returning your wonderful manuscript. I use the word 'wonderful,' in the sense that it is filled with the wonder of the world and is able to awaken some of it in the reader. You have power of expression and illustration. The direction in which you are feeling-out the world seems to me—I will not say 'right,' as if there were but one way to go, but good and fruifful. Your comments on paradoxes and gaps and competition and the limitations of groups that are worth living in, are stirring to the stuff of life and of the hope of making things better. That is the main thing. 'Vitoyf' be with your venture!"

In the theatre, my son has begun newly an old apprenticeship of stage directing and acting, as assistant stage manager to David Belasco in a recent production *-some forty years after Chapter XIV of this memoir, wherein Mr. Belasco has related his own New York beginnings, with "a piece of pie and to work," under Steele MacKaye. During 1926-'27 (like his grandfather, having dropped his first name), Keith MacKave has been engaged in work at the Yale University theatre (acting, playwriting and production), under direction of Prof. George Pierce Baker, as a student in the "47 Workshop" at New Haven, where Prof. Baker is continuing his distinguished activities. already memorable in university history at Cambridge.-In the New York Times, Sunday, Feb. 20, 1927, appeared the photograph of a young man, in the make-up of a mountaineer, with the following caption: "The Leading Man of the Play given at Yale before the Drama Conference, Keith MacKaye, who played the lead in Lazy, written and produced by the Drama Department of the University." Commenting on that three-act comedy of the Ozark Mountains (by Leila A. Wade, a student in Professor Baker's dramatic course at Yale), the critic of the New Haven Evening Register had written (Feb. 12):

"The gradual development of the character, Samuel Potter, which after all was the crux of the play, left the audience with the assurance that here were the makings of something very fine. Keith MacKaye, who played the all-critical rôle, got the most out of the part, and that most sufficient to lift

the play to the nucleus of a Lightnin', or a Shavings."

At Yale also, he wrote the Yale University Prize Poem, entitled Beginnings, for which he was awarded the Cook Prize in Poetry, 1927.

On page 63 of this Volume Two, of "Epoch," is recorded the comment of Miss Mary Shaw, after witnessing the début of Arvia MacKaye, at the Comedy Theatre, New York. Of Keith's younger sisters (Arvia and Christy), Arvia published her first poem in Harper's Magazine at the age of nine, quickly followed by a series of poems in Harper's, Poetry, The Little Review, The Outlook, etc.—Soon afterward appeared her Prologue to my Bird Masque, Sanctuary (F. A. Stokes, New York), and her illustrations to the Ballads of my play Wash-

^{*} All the Way from Texas, by Willard Mack (later renamed Lily Sue), first produced at Nixon's Apollo Theatre, Atlantic City, N. J., August 2, 1926. In this production Willard Mack and William Courtleigh played leading röles, Robert Keith MacKaye acted the part of Buck, a Rancher, and served "for Mr. Belasco" as assistant stage manager, the stage manager being Burke Symon.

ington (H. W. Gray, New York). In 1926, Braithwaite's Anthology contains her group of poems, entitled *Communion*, with her record to date in its "Biographical Dictionary of Poets in the United States."

In university student work (at Miami and Radcliffe) Arvia Mac-Kaye initiated (1921-'23) some phases of the intercollegiate movement out of which have developed "The Student Forum," and "The New Student" magazine; and, 1923, as one of the Student Forum delegates from America to the Youth Movement Conferences in Germany, she took part in several of those international occasions. In sculpture, she executed (at Taos, New Mexico, 1922) a commission for the statue of a Pueblo Indian dancer, "Star-Road," now in bronze at Miami University, and the portrait head of a Pueblo Indian girl (Albidia), now at the Santa Fé Museum. In a rhythmic form of expression (kindredly related to the "harmonic" expression formulated and taught by her grandfather), she made her début in a scene from Goethe's Faust. at the Comedy Theatre, New York, Nov. 1, 1925, and at London, in 1926. For these two volumes of "Epoch" she has made the drawings for chapter headings and endings, as cited in the List of Illustrations. and the woodcuts (The Way Seeker, The World Finder and Beyond) on pages i, 1; ii, 1; and ii, 465.

Arvia's sister, Christy (Christina Loring), since her early childhood, has contributed poems to journals of poetry and to her school maga-

zines, entering Smith College in the class of 1930.

From their mother (née Marion Homer Morse, of Cambridge, Mass.), my third cousin and my collaborator in this memoir, herself of a New England heritage including the artists, Winslow Homer and Abbott Thayer in near kinship—all these our children come naturally by an emphasized propensity to pursue the dream-life of art.—They themselves, young poet thinkers, have so aptly expressed intimations of those subconscious motives, upwelling from the continuity of all creative life through "the mystery of emotion," that I cannot more fitly suggest some elusive meanings of this memoir than by quoting some lines of their own, which follow, written not for this volume, but for their own thoughts. The first is a poem by my daughter, Arvia (The Lute of Life):

Ash and flame, sand and dew, Ever build the lute anew.

Star and sun and seraph wings Play upon the tautened strings.

From the dark and hollow grave— Tidal music, wave on wave:

Sound and silence, shade and shine— Body of a life divine.

Lute of life, with human strings,— Upon the cross the spirit sings. From a longer poem by my son (The Russian Bell) these lines are excerpts:

So man moves on, as foam that falls In midnight dance, by rockbound walls To gambol on the sculptured breast Of thundrous rapids, unrepressed . . .

Till always, when our living tide
Has reached the turning, far and wide
There floats across the hollow sky
A tinnient whisper, or a sigh
Half heard, half shadowed in the mind
By wraiths of patient bones behind;
And wakened spectres, dimly wrought
Grope in the shadows of our thought . . .

Without the bitterest of life
Unknown we slumber in the strife
Of our own minds, and dying go
To learn what man must live to know:
The gifts of God to every man
Are free: all dream, some think, few plan;
But only sublime fools create
The grandeur of our future state.

So hark! The bell at zero hour Strikes; the indomitable power Labors; famine, toil and woe Proclaim the triumph they foreknow.

The third is a little poem by my daughter, Christy—(Largess Lost). During all of her young life—through interrupted seasons—Christy has watched me at work upon the materials of this her grandfather's memoir, and has contributed to it a thousand spontaneous services rendered by her quickly sensitive and selfless spirit.

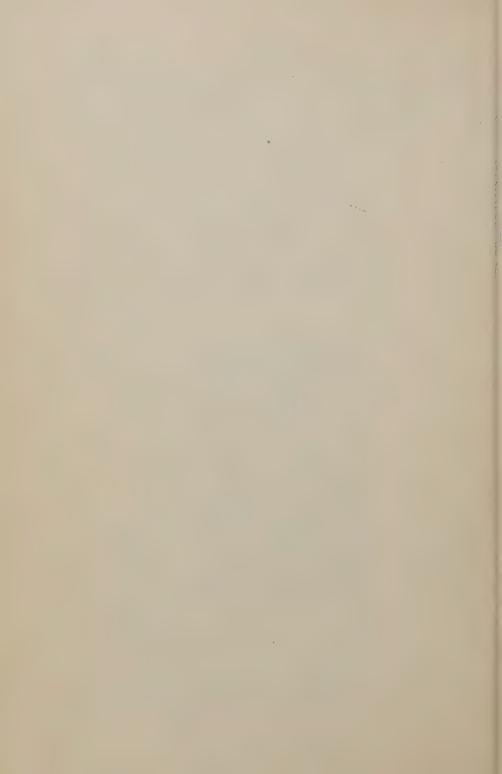
To my little studio on our Cornish New Hampshire hillside, often she has run down the home-path, past mountain pink in bud or barberries red-ripe in snow, errand-bearing to me from her mother some sheaf of biographical manuscripts, and found me in my accustomed chair, by the redwood table, amid pale blue coils of pipe-smoke—a "rainbowed" nimbus, thronged for me by many a play and poem and haunting tale beckoning to be born—wherein gladly (though at times perhaps wistfully) I let their alluring forms float back into limbo, in order to fulfil if possible the more dedicate work I had willed in this completion of "Epoch."

There, in her early teens, coming to me once—half shyly interruptive—Christy left with me (expressing her own thoughts of my thoughts) this little elusive poem of her composing, which now fulfils that then far-off completion—a link of the dream-chain that binds Before and Beyond:

I live in ghostly bowers
Beautful with roses
Twining round spectred towers,
Rambling o'er ruins:
There weep unfallen showers
Silvery and rainbowed;
There leap the joyous hours
From my blue pipe-smoke. . . .

Of lovely unborn flowers Each takes a garland.





Addenda

- I. SEVEN INVENTIONS OF STEELE MACKAYE.
- II. STATEMENT BY A. F. VICTOR, CONCERNING MACKAYE'S INVEN-TIONS AND MOTION PICTURES.
- III. POSTSCRIPT, CONCERNING OSCAR WILDE, CHARLES READE, WM. D. Howells, Saint Louis Masque, LINDBERGH, ETC.
- IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY: A NOTE.

SEVEN INVENTIONS

I.-LUXAULEATOR, OR CURTAIN OF LIGHT II.—NEBULATOR, OR CLOUD-CREATOR III.—SILENT UNFOLDING ANNOUNCER IV.—ILLUMISCOPE, COLOURATOR, ETC.

V.—SLIDING STAGE

VI.—FLOATING STAGE VII.—PROSCENIUM ADJUSTOR

Note.—Steele MacKaye was the inventor of about a hundred appliances relating to the improvement of stage mechanism, and lighting, nearly all of which were patented by the United States Patent Office during his lifetime; inventions which created the modern revolution in theatrical productions. Many of these have been used during many years and have contributed to further developments in theatre lighting and mechanism and in motion pictures. Others have never yet been put to their inventor's intended uses, and remain as contributions to the theatre's art in the future.

In this volume it is possible to represent only the following seven examples, which are here included, not simply as matters of record, but as indications in respect to the qualities of concentration and of technical mastery inherent in MacKaye's imagination and executive powers. Two other inventions (Double Stage and Folding Theatre-Chair) are included at the end of Volume One.

An abbreviated list of his inventions is given in the front matter of Volume Two.—Cf., on page ii, 335, Steele MacKaye's telegram, July 5, 1892: "All my patents are granted." The seven inventions here described are recorded at the

U. S. Patent Office as patented on Jan. 24, 1893.

A DETAIL OF THE SPECTATORIUM (Basement Plan), with reference to ground

plan on page ii, 21, is included on page c.

SEVEN INVENTIONS OF STEELE MACKAYE

AS DESCRIBED IN SPECIFICATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

I.—LUXAULEATOR.

Specifications forming part of Letters Patent No. 490,487, dated January 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,295. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MACKAYE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Chicago, in the county of Cook and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful improvements in means employed in place of the ordinary drop-scene for screening or intercepting the view between the audience and the stage and which I term a "Luxauleator"; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates generally to stage appliances, but more particularly to the means employed for preventing the audience from witnessing the operations or movements of the actors behind the proscenium opening between the acts, or when it is desired to shift or re-arrange stage

scenery.

The primary object of the invention is to provide means for instantaneously intercepting all sight of anything that may be placed or moved in the space at the rear of the proscenium opening or arch, and thereby dispense with the ordinary drop-scene or curtain, which can only be raised and lowered at the expense of considerable time, and is liable to hitch or catch in operation, thus causing delay and often exposing to the view of the audience the stage effects or movements of actors or persons on the stage at times when it is desirable that the view of the audience shall be cut off.

The invention consists essentially of a series of lamps set in suitable backings or reflectors placed in the form of a border or other suitable

arrangement around or about the proscenium opening so as to throw one portion of space (in rear of the opening) into complete shade while flooding the opposite space (as the auditorium in front of the opening) with rays of light so crossing each other and blended in such manner as to intercept all sight of anything that may be placed or moved in the shaded portion of space. By this means I dispense with the ordinary drop-curtain and at the same time render it unnecessary to extinguish the light in the auditorium when removing or shifting stage scenery, and an instantaneous exhibition of scenery or concealment of the operations of persons behind the proscenium opening may be effected without the objections incident to the use of the usual slow-moving drop-curtain and the slow and tedious process of manipulating the same when it is desired to quickly change a scene; the audience meanwhile having the full benefit of a lighted hall.

The invention is also applicable to decorative purposes, that is, for increasing the decorative effect of rooms or portions of rooms, either in private dwellings, or in churches, art galleries, lyceums, libraries, or other

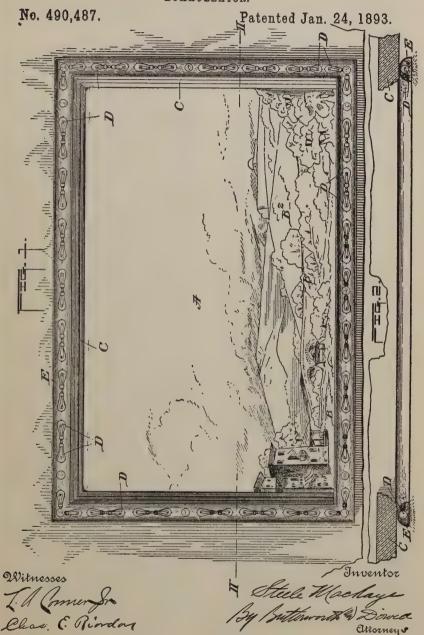
public buildings.

Referring to the accompanying drawings, which form a part of this specification, and in which similar letters of reference are used to denote similar parts, Figure 1 represents a front elevation of a portion of the proscenium wall of a theater with my invention applied thereto. Fig. 2 is a section taken on the line II—II of Fig. 1.

A, denotes a drop on which a sky-

foundation is painted.

S. MACKAYE.
LUXAULEATOR.



B, B', B² denote movable stages on which may be mounted scenery of any desired description, or which may be plain stages or a platform of any required size and dimensions for the exhibition of dramatic or spectacular performances or for other purposes.

C, denotes the edge or boundary of the proscenium wall or arch forming the proscenium opening of a theater, or other similar opening in a building to which my improvement may be

applied.

D. D. denote electric lamps which are preferably arranged in the form of a border encircling the proscenium opening. These lamps may be set in suitable backings E, which are also preferably reflectors, and are adapted to direct or throw the light into the space at the front of the opening and to cut off or screen the light from the space back of such opening. In this instance I have shown a continuous concave reflector which surrounds the opening and may be secured in any proper manner to the edges of the wall or arch C. But it is obvious that the form of the reflector and the arrangement of the lights may be varied in many ways without departing from the spirit of my invention. Electric lamps are preferable for obvious reasons, but any suitable source of light may be employed, and it is my intention to use gas or any of the common methods of producing light. Moreover, while reflectors are preferable, any suitable backing which will cause the rays of light to pass in the proper direction and prevent the light from entering the shaded portion of space back of the lights may be employed. The reflectors may also consist of any of the ordinary forms and may be arranged in a variety of ways, with provision for adjustment to change the angle of the reflected rays to meet the necessities of the case, and the lights may be bunched or grouped according to taste, particularly when used for decorative purposes, and may be colored so as to impart any desired tint or shade of coloring. But the arrangement of the lamps for theatrical purposes should be such

that the rays of light from opposite lamps will cross each other centrally of the proscenium opening at an angle, the degree of which will depend upon the proximity of the front row of seats to the proscenium opening or arch.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is:—

1. In combination with the prosecnium opening, a series of lamps bordering the same and provided with backings adapted to throw the space back of the lamps and opening into complete shade, while flooding the opposite portion of space with light, so as to form in effect a vivid curtain or screen of light that will intercept all sight of persons or things occupying the shaded portion of the space, substantially as described.

2. In combination with the prosenium arch or wall having the usual opening therein, a series of lamps arranged in the form of a border about said opening, and a reflector or reflectors adapted to screen the light from such opening so as to throw the space at the rear thereof into shade and flood the opposite space with light, substantially as de-

scribed.

3. In combination with the wall or arch forming the proscenium opening, the continuous concave reflector surrounding such opening, and a series of lamps set in said reflector so as to exclude the light from the opening, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

4. In combination with the division wall having the opening therein, a series of lamps bordering such opening and provided with backings or reflectors adapted to flood the space at one side of the opening with light and throw the opposite space into shade, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two wit-

nesses.

STEELE MACKAYE.

Witnesses:

POWELL CROSLEY, SIDNEY CLARKE WHITE, Jr.

II.—CLOUD-CREATOR OR NEBULATOR.

SPECIFICATION FORMING PART OF LETTERS PATENT No. 490,481, DATED JANUARY 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,289. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MAC-KAYE, etc.

My invention relates to apparatus for producing scenic effects, and the object of the invention is to provide improved means for creating clouds or cloud shadows so as to produce the effect of clouds or cloud shadows moving upon or over a landscape or sky foundation or other scenic arrangement, for the improvement of realism in land and water scenic effects.

The invention consists essentially of a cloud cloth having the cloud forms or shadows placed thereon and adapted to be moved in front of an illuminating lamp so as to cast the cloud shadows over the landscape or scenic arrangement or produce the effect of moving clouds upon a sky foundation or other surface. cloud cloth may consist of any suitable material on which may be placed by painting or otherwise, various cloud effects or forms; the cloth being secured to a sliding frame or fitted over rollers so as to move in proximity to an illuminating coloring device from which light may pass through the transparent or semitransparent material on which the cloud effects or shadows are placed, so as to cast the shadows upon the scenic arrangements or sky foundation, thereby imitating clouds moving through the sky or cloud shadows moving over land and water.

The invention also consists in certain details of construction and combinations of parts all as will be hereinafter described and particularly pointed out in the claims at the

end of this specification.

Referring to the drawings, which form a part of this specification and in which similar letters of reference are used to denote similar parts in each of the several views, Figure 1 is

a fragmentary end elevation of the illuminating or fly gallery of a theater or other similar structure showing my improvements applied thereto. Fig. 2 is a plan of the cloud creator or "nebulator," and Fig. 3, is an end elevation of the same. Fig. 4 is a detail diagrammatical view illustrating the cloud and shadow makers supplied with separate illuminating lamps.

A, denotes a masking border or screen for concealing the machinery in the illuminating or fly gallery, and A', a similar screen in rear

thereof.

B, denotes a sky or landscape drop which is suspended from the fly gallery in position to be lowered when desired.

B' denotes a sky foundation or drop lowered ready to receive the various cloud or other effects which may be thrown upon the surface thereof.

C, denotes an illuminating device and colorator which may consist of a rotary cylinder the periphery of which is made of any suitable transparent or semi-transparent material with the desired coloring effects painted upon or worked into the material in such manner as to blend the colors and secure the various tints and shades desired in any scene, together with a lamp and an adjustable reflector or illumiscope placed within the drum or cylinder so that the light may pass through the variously colored periphery of the drum and through the cloud effects or forms upon the cloud cloth for the purpose of producing the desired scenic effect upon the sky foundation. Said colorator and illumiscope form the subject matter of a separate application of even date herewith and as I do not desire to claim the same specifically in this case further description thereof herein is not deemed

lxxvii

necessary. Moreover, while I preferably use such an illuminating and coloring apparatus in connection with my present invention, any illuminating lamp or other suitable source of

light may be employed.

D denotes the cloud creator or nebulator which is supported in an oblique position with respect to the illuminating device C, so as to cause the rays of light to pass through the cloud forms and fall upon the sky foundation B' as indicated by the dotted lines, d, d', in Fig. 1; these latter lines indicating the scope of illumination of the nebulator. This nebulator consists essentially of a cloud cloth or curtain E, having the desired cloud forms placed thereon, by painting or otherwise, and secured to a sliding frame, which may be supported upon guide rails and moved at any desired rate of speed in front of the lamp, but I preferably fix the cloth upon rollers E', E2, which are journaled in brackets e, e, fixed upon a sliding frame F. The frame F is supported upon guide rails G, G', which may extend partly or entirely across the fly gallery parallel with the illuminating device C, and in proximity thereto. shaft of the upper roll E' is provided at one end with a bevel wheel H, which meshes with a similar bevel wheel I, fixed upon a stud or shaft K, journaled in a bracket f projecting from the frame F. The stud or shaft K is provided at its opposite end with a gear wheel L, which meshes with a rack M, fixed to the guide rail G. By this means when the frame F is slid back and forth upon the guide rails G, G', motion will be imparted to the gear wheel L, by contact with the rack M and thence to the roller E', by means of the intermediate bevel gearing, thus causing the cloud cloth E to be drawn over or wound upon the roller E' and unwound from the roller E2 simultaneously with its horizontal movement caused by the longitudinal movement of the sliding frame. The frame which carries the cloud cloth is also adjustably supported so that it may be arranged at any desired angle to the illuminating lamp, re-flector or other source of light, whereby, as the cloth is drawn or caused to move across the path of movement of the oblique sliding

frame, the shade effect or cloud produced upon the sky foundation may be made to approach or recede from the light simultaneously with its two-fold movement through or across the sky in a descending or ascending course, thereby causing the cloud effect to increase or diminish in size as it rises or descends.

N denotes the shadow maker or "umbrator" which consists simply of a sliding frame and cloud cloth with . cloud shadows or forms thereon similar to the cloud creator; the frame being fitted upon suitable guide rails O, O, and provided with a cloud cloth on which may be placed or painted any desired form of cloud shadow or like effect. The umbrator is preferably supported beneath the illuminating lamp so as to cast the shadows upon the landscape or other scenic arrangement indicated at Q in Fig. 1, these scenic arrangements being supported upon movable stages which will permit the desired combination to be made for the attainment of any desired scenic effect, or exhibition of any desired perform-

The dotted lines n, n', indicate the scope of illumination of the umbra-The umbrator and nebulator may be used singly or together, and may each have an illuminating lamp C' C2, as indicated in Fig. 4, if desired. By these means I am enabled to produce the effect of clouds or cloud shadows moving through the sky or over land and water, and to give the appearance of a cloud rising above the horizon or descending the sky, and passing in the desired direction at any desired rate of speed, while gradually increasing or diminishing in size as it rises or descends below the horizon. These various effects may also, when desirable be accompanied with the usual imitations of thunder and lightning; the lightning being produced by means of lights which are moved rapidly in a zig-zag or other course behind the drop or transparent surface B' on which the sky foundation is painted; and if desired a star-light night or similar effect may be given by per-forating the drop B' and fixing suitable lights at the rear of the perforations therein. In this manner various effects may be produced of clouds or cloud shadows in imitation

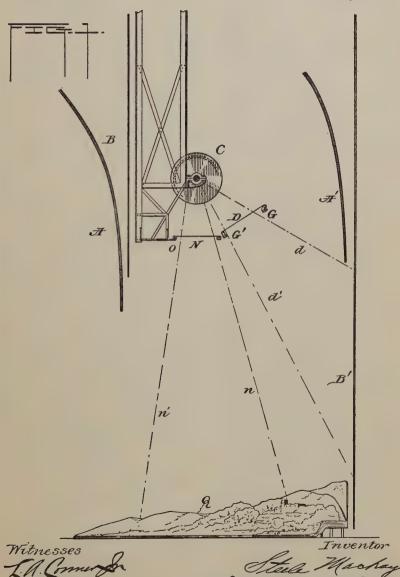
(No Model.)

2 Sheets-Sheet 1.

S. MACKAYE. CLOUD CREATOR OR NEBULATOR.

No. 490,481.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.



Witnesses LA Commen & Llass, E. Rindon.

of a slightly cloudy sky, or a stormy, cloudy sky, or of light or heavy, swift or slowly moving clouds, and of an approaching, raging or reced-

ing storm.

It is obvious that other means may be provided for moving the cloud cloth in proximity to the illuminating device, and that either a lateral, vertical, or oblique movement may be given the cloth in respect to the light, by simply winding the cloth over fixed rollers or securing it to a sliding frame as in the case of the shadow maker or umbrator without necessarily providing for a two-fold or three-fold movement, and I do not desire to be limited to the exact construction and arrangement of parts herein shown and described. should also be noted that the term cloud-cloth as employed herein denotes either the moving transparent or semi-transparent material with cloud forms or cloud shadows thereon, as described with reference to the nebulator and umbrator respectively; this term being used interchangeably in respect to the moving cloth into or upon which the desired forms may be worked or painted.

Having thus fully described my invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of

the United States, is:-

1. An apparatus for producing moving cloud effects or cloud shadows, comprising a movable cloud cloth having the desired forms thereon, an illuminating device arranged in proximity to the cloud cloth, and means for moving the cloth in the desired direction for producing the moving clouds or shadows, substan-

tially as described.

2. In apparatus for producing scenic effects, the combination with the cloud cloth having the desired forms thereon, the illuminating device, the sliding frame carrying said cloth and means for moving the cloth across the path of movement of the sliding frame, so as to produce a

two-fold movement of the cloth and cloud effects, substantially as described.

3. In combination with the sliding frame, the rollers journaled therein, the cloud cloth secured to said rollers and adapted to be wound thereon, and gearing for imparting motion to said rollers by the movement of the sliding frame, substantially as described.

4. In combination with the illuminating device, the obliquely arranged sliding frame, the cloud cloth supported thereon, and means for causing the cloud cloth to move across the path of movement of the sliding frame, substantially as described.

5. In combination with the illuminating lamp, the sliding frame supporting the cloud cloth thereon, mechanism for causing said cloth to move across the path of movement of the sliding frame, and means for adjusting and securing said frame at any desired angle in respect to the lamp, substantially as described.

6. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a movable cloud cloth and an illuminating and coloring device, substantially as described, whereby cloud effects or shadows may be thrown upon the scenic arrangements or sky foundation in variegated colors, substan-

tially as described.

7. In combination with the illuminating devices, the nebulator, the umbrator, and means for actuating said devices so as to produce the effect of clouds and cloud shadows movino simultaneously over the landscape and sky foundation, or other scenic arrangements, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

STEELE MACKAYE.

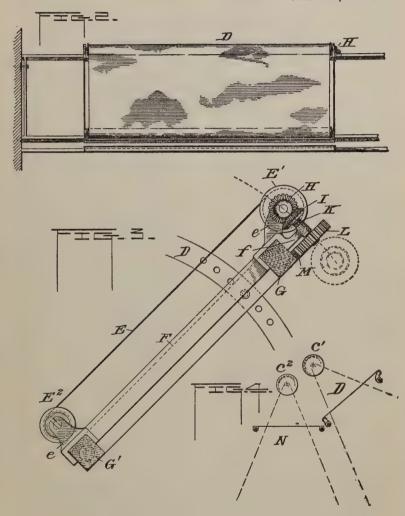
POWELL CROSLEY, SIDNEY C. WHITE, Jr. (No Model.)

2 Sheets-Sheet 2.

S. MACKAYE. CLOUD CREATOR OR NEBULATOR.

No. 490 481.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.



Witnesses T. M. Come for Chas. & Rivdoy. Inventor
Steel Machage
By Butterworth & Down

III.—SILENT UNFOLDING ANNOUNCER APPLIANCE FOR THEATERS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 490,489, dated January 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,297. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MAC-

My inve

My invention relates to stage appliances, and the object is to provide means by which the performance or scene which is being exhibited may be automatically explained or interpreted by a silent unfolding announcer, without subjecting the audience to the annoyance incident to an oral explanation when required to render the performance or scenic exhibition intelligible and interesting to the audience.

The invention will be hereinafter described and particularly pointed out in the claims at the end of this

specification.

Referring to the accompanying drawings, in which similar letters of reference are used to denote similar parts, Figure 1 represents a perspective view of a part of the proscenium of a theater illustrating my improvement applied thereto, and Fig. 2 is a detail fragmentary sectional view of parts of the device.

P, denotes one of the side flanges or walls of the proscenium of a theater or other similar structure, P' the proscenium opening, and S, scenery or scenic arrangements on the stage or stages in rear of such opening.

A, denotes a traveling sheet or strip of cloth, paper, or other suitable material, on which may be written or printed in any preferred manner or style any desired notice, advertisement, explanation, description, or interpretation, in brief, or in full, or outline of the order to be pursued, or the subjects embraced in any exercise or entertainment; such explanations or interpretations being adapted to be exhibited simultaneously with the presentation or exhibition of the performance or scenic

arrangements, so that the audience may comprehend the meaning of various acts, scenes, part-scenes or representations without the necessity of an oral explanation, thereby dispensing with a public lecturer or interpreter and overcoming the objections incident to such practices, which are rendered necessary in presenting panoramas and various other entertainments wherein the meaning is not obvious to the ordinary observer.

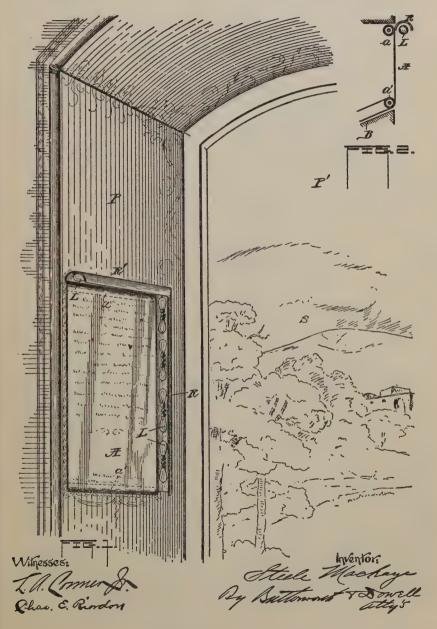
L, L, denote a series of electric (or other suitable) lamps, bordering the sheet or strip A, at the side of the proscenium opening, and at the top of the sheet, said lamps being set in backings or reflectors R, R', which serve also as screens, permitting the light to fall on the announcing sheet only, and excluding the light from the proscenium opening so as not to interfere with the illumination of the picture, painting or scenic effect in the scenitorium. These deflectors R. R', may be of any desired form suitable for the purpose, but preferably consist of tin-plate or other metal strips having concave reflecting surfaces in which the lamps are set, as shown. The sheet or strip A may be wound upon an upper roller a, and pass thence over a lower roller a', the latter being provided with a band wheel or pulley over which may be placed a belt or band B, which may connect with a similar pulley or wheel fixed upon a crank-axle or other suitable shaft, by which motion may be imparted to the roller a', so as to cause the same to revolve at any desired rate of speed, for the purpose of moving the sheet and exhibiting the written or printed matter thereon at the proper time and in the desired order to conform to the order of arrangement or presentation of the scenic effects, perform-

IXXXI

S. MACKAYE, APPLIANCE FOR THEATERS.

No. 490,489.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.



ance, or exercise.

What I claim and desire to secure

by Letters Patent is:-

1. An automatic announcer or silent interpreter for theaters and other places of amusement, comprising a sheet of cloth or other suitable material bearing thereon the words that are to be uttered by the singers or performers and arranged in proximity to the proscenium opening in position to be moved so as to exhibit in the desired order the explanatory matter thereon simultaneously with the presentation or exhibition of the exercise or performance, a series of lamps arranged in the form of a border about said sheet, a backing in which said lamps are set adapted to throw the light upon the sheet and screen the proscenium opening, and means for moving the cloth past the lamps, substantially as described.

2. The combination with the pro-

scenium of a theater or other similar structure, provided with an automatic announcing sheet or silent interpreter, consisting of a traveling sheet of suitable material having the desired explanatory matter placed thereon, and mechanism for unfolding or drawing out the sheet so as to exhibit such explanatory matter in the desired order, of the reflector consisting of a metallic plate having a concave reflecting surface bordering the traveling sheet, and a series of lamps set in said reflector so as to throw the light upon the front of said sheet and screen the proscenium opening, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

STEELE MACKAYE.

Witnesses:

POWELL CROSLEY,
SIDNEY CLARKE WHITE, Jr.

IV.—ILLUMISCOPE, COLOURATOR, ETC.

APPARATUS FOR PRODUCING SCENIC EFFECTS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 490,483, dated January 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,291. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MAC-

KAYE, etc.

My invention relates to devices for illuminating and coloring stage scenery, or producing scenic effects, and the object is to provide means for the improvement of scenic illumination upon the stage and the increase of realism in scenic effects. To this end I have devised improved appliances for imitating the shades and tints of light which color the landscape, from the darkness of night, through dawn, sunrise, early morning, noon, afternoon, evening, sunset, twilight, moonlight into the darkness of midnight again; these appliances permitting the imitation of the tints of the hours to be produced completely, or in part, as desired, and

facilitating the passage and blending of the various tints each into the other so as to illustrate the slow progress of the hours throughout the whole day. They also permit the imitation of clouds moving through the sky, and of cloud shadows moving over land and water.

The invention will first be described with reference to the accompanying drawings and then particularly pointed out in the claims at

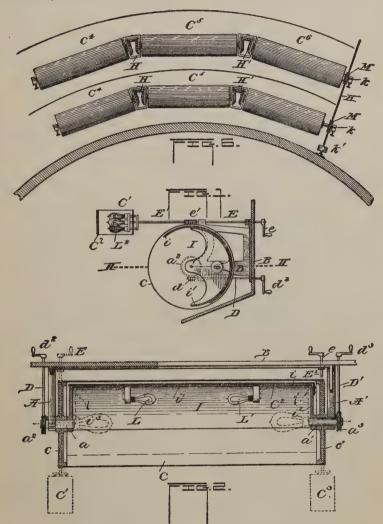
the end of this specification.

Referring to the drawings which form a part of this specification; Figure 1 represents a sectional end view of a device embodying my invention; Fig. 2, is a horizontal section of the same on line II—II of Fig. 1; Figs. 3 and 4 are detail sectional end views of the reflector or

S. MACKAYE. APPARATUS FOR PRODUCING SCENIC EFFECTS.

No. 490,483.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.



Witnesses T. A. Cormer fr. Clas C. Rindon. Inventor Stelle Mostrage By Butterwood " " Dowell Chromey! "illumiscope" illustrating the same in different positions; Fig. 5 is a fragmentary end view of the illuminating gallery or frame work above the proscenium opening of a theater with my improvements attached; Fig. 6, is a horizontal section illustrating a double series of coloring drums or "colorators" geared together so as to move in unison; Fig. 7 is an end view of a modification of the invention; Fig. 8, is an end view of another modification; and Fig. 9, is a front view of a further modification, part being broken away.

In the preferred form of my invention I propose to employ a rotary drum of any suitable transparent or semi-transparent material, such as paper, glass, velluloid or gelatine, with the desired coloring effects painted upon or worked into the same in such manner as to blend the colors and secure the various tints desired in any scene, together with an electric lamp or other suitable source of light properly supported within the drum so that the light may pass through the tinted or variously colored circumference of the drum when rotated, conveying the tint or combination of tints thereon and causing the same to fall upon the drop, sky-foundation, or land-scape for the purpose of producing the desired scenic effect. A drum may also be provided with a covering of any suitable transparent or semi-transparent substance, upon which the various tints of the hours in their order of succession, or other scenic effects, may be dyed or painted. I may also employ traveling belts, bands, curtains or slides of suitably colored or tinted transparent or semitransparent material, interposed between the light and the sky foundation, drop-scene or scenic arrangements upon the stage upon which it is desired to convey the tints or coloring effects.

C in the drawings, denotes a rotary drum or "colorator" which may consist of any suitable material, as above described, and is provided with heads c, c', which are fitted to revolve on trunnions or spindles a, a', journaled in brackets A, A', which may be secured in any suitable manner to the frame work of the building or to a shield B, depending there

from as clearly shown in Figs. 1 and 5.

I denotes an "illumiscope" or duplex reflector placed within the coloring drum C, and may be composed of two segments i, i', fitted together so as to move one within the other. The segment i, is rigidly secured to the end frame-piece or bracket i2. which is made fast to the inner end of the trunnion a', and the segment i', is rigidly secured to the opposite trunnion a in a similar manner, so that the two segments may rotate with the trunnions independently of each other. The inner concave faces of these segments are provided with reflecting surfaces, and to the inner segment may be secured the electric (or other suitable) lamps L, L', which may be placed in circuit with a dynamo or other generator by passing the wires l, l' thereof through the hollow trunnions a, a' and connecting them with the circuit wires in the usual manner.

To provide means for rotating the segments i, i' of the illumiscope I secure to the outer ends of the trunnions a, a', worm wheels a^2 , a^3 which engage worms d, d' on the ends of shafts D, D', the latter being provided with crank handles d^2 , d^3 , whereby the segments may be rotated for the purpose of regulating the opening for the passage of light as indicated by the dotted lines in

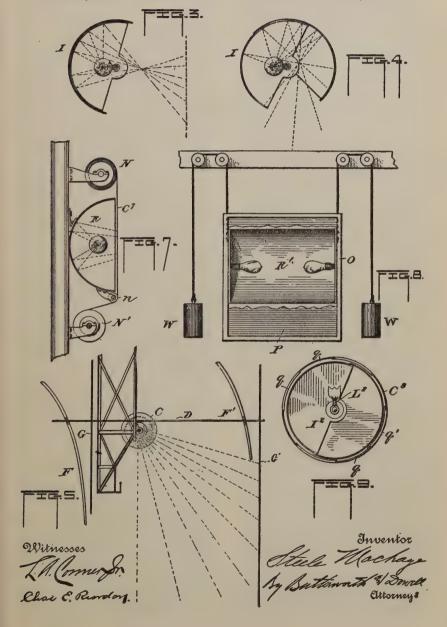
Figs. 3, 4 and 5.

E denotes a shaft having a crank e at one end and a worm e' thereon which worm may engage a worm gear on the head c of the drum C, whereby the drum may be rotated about the lamps at any desired rate of speed so as to gradually change the tints or other effects of illumination in the scene, such effects being caused by the passage of the light from the lamps through the shade, colors or forms which may be placed upon or worked into the transparent surface of the drum. If desired the shaft E may be formed or provided with an extension E' forming a rotary support for an auxiliary coloring device or drum C', which may consist of a series of lamps L2 with variably colored globes, or a lamp or lamps of ordinary construction placed within a coloring drum C2, and a corresponding auxiliary coloring device C3, with

S. MACKAYE.
APPARATUS FOR PRODUCING SCENIC EFFECTS.

No. 490,483.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.



operating shaft E2, may be provided at the opposite end of the drum C. as indicated by full and dotted lines in Fig. 2, these auxiliary devices being made removable so that they may be dispensed with when desirable.

F (Fig. 5) denotes a masking border or screen for concealing the machinery in the fly-gallery, and F' a similar screen in rear thereof.

G, denotes a sky or landscape drop suspended from the fly-gallery in po-sition to be lowered when desired, and G' a sky or landscape drop lowered ready to receive the coloring effects, clouds or shadows thrown upon it by the colorator.

By rotating the segments i, i', of the illumiscope the opening for the passage of light may be enlarged or decreased at will, as indicated by the dotted lines in Figs. 3 and 4, thus controlling the direction, amount, and extension of light that may be desirable for illuminating purposes.

The illumiscope having been properly adjusted, the light from the lamps will be reflected and pass through the shade, colors, or forms which may be placed upon or worked into the transparent or semi-transparent surface of the drum or colorator C, and the latter may be rotated at any desired rate of speed so as to cause the effects upon the sky foundation or landscape or scenic arrangement which is being illuminated to be gradually changed so as to give the appearance of the various effects produced by nature, throughout the day and night, with the ever varying changes of a cloudy day or stormy day or night accompanied by various storm or other effects indicating either foul or fair weather. The device being specially adapted to illuminate and color scenic arrangements imitating nature and to increase realism in such imitations. By properly adjusting the illumiscope the beams of light may be centered on any part of the surface, scenery or painting or spread over the entire surface at will, and the illuminating effect may be increased or diminished in accordance with the wishes of the operator or the requirements of the occasion or use to which the invention may be put.

In Fig 6 is shown a double series of colorators, C4, C5, C6, which are con-

nected by beveled gearing as at H, H', so as to cause the several drums to revolve simultaneously and at the same rate of speed. The end drums C^a are geared to a worm-shaft K, by means of worms k, k, on said shaft engaging worm wheels M, M, on the drum shafts or spindles. worm-shaft K is also provided with a pulley k', about which may pass a band or belt leading from an engine or other driving shaft for actuating In the arrangement the drums. shown, the intermediate drums C5, of the two series, will revolve in an opposite direction to the drums C4, C6, and in this case the several drums should be so colored or painted that the tints, shades, or forms thrown upon the sky foundation or other surface by one drum will correspond with the tints and shades thrown by the oppositely revolving drums. This arrangement avoids the necessity of multiplying the gearing, but if desired suitable gears may be provided to cause all the drums to rotate in the same direction.

In the modification shown in Fig. 7, the colorator C7, may consist of a band or belt arranged to travel in front of a suitable reflector R, the belt being wound upon a roller N, from which it passes over a small roller n, to a roller N', which latter may be provided with a crank handle or pulley for winding the belt thereon, the upper roller being provided with a weight or retractile spring to hold the belt or curtain taut and cause the same to be automatically wound upon said roller after the manner of an ordinary curtain roller when the belt is unwound or released from the

roller N'.

In Fig. 8 is shown a colorator consisting of a vertically adjustable frame with a suitably colored transparent or semi-transparent cloth or other covering P, which may be suspended by means of weights W, W, in front of a reflector R', and by raising and lowering this frame the colored curtain or cloth may be moved so as to gradually change the tints or other effects of illumination upon the scene, caused by the passage of the light through the shade, colors, or forms placed upon the cloth.

In the modification shown in Fig. 9, the colorator consists of a rotary

drum composed of variously colored overlapping layers or thin sheets or sections q, q', of paper or other suitable material through which the rays of light may pass to the surface or painting on which the scenic effect is to be produced, so as to cause the variously colored sections or sheets to pass successively at any desired rate of speed, between the opening of the illumiscope I² inclosed therein and the surface to be illuminated, for the purpose of producing the desired tints, shades or other effects upon the surface or painting on which the rays of light may fall.

I preferably employ an illumiscope of the described construction in connection with the colorator, but the two devices may be used independently and are applicable generally for illuminating purposes in theaters, public halls, or other places of amusement, and while I also preferably employ electric lights for illuminating purposes, the apparatus may be used in connection with any suitable source of light, as for instance a gas jet L², as shown in

When the electric lamps are used as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, they may be fastened upon the trunnions connected with the drum C, as indicated in dotted lines, and supported by the brackets A, A', so as to revolve with the drum, in which case the illumiscope must be separated from the lamp supports, and given an independent support, or it may be dispensed with altogether so as to simplify the device, but thereby the illuminating power will be greatly decreased as well as the faculty of controlling the amount of space in or upon the scene upon which the illuminating rays may fall.

The colorator and illumiscope can be placed above the scenes, in front of each, or at the side, as may be desired, and may be worked by hand or machinery; the hand operating shafts shown in Fig. 1 being dispensed with in the latter case and suitable gearing provided, as for instance pulleys on the worm shafts connecting by belts and pulleys with the driven shaft of an engine.

It will be understood of course that various modifications may be made without departing from the spirit of my invention, and hence I do not desire to be limited to the exact construction and arrangement of parts shown and described herein.

Having thus fully described my invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of

the United States, is:-

1. An apperatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a variously colored sheet or drum consisting of a substance through which light may pass, means for causing the passage of rays of light therethrough onto the surface or object to be illuminated, and mechanism for causing the variously colored portions of such substance to pass successively in proximity to the light, substantially as described.

2. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a variously colored sheet or drum composed of a transparent substance, means for causing the passage of light therethrough onto the surface or scene to be illuminated, and mechanism for causing the variously colored portions of such substance to pass successively in proximity to the light, substan-

tially as described.

S. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a variously colored sheet or drum composed of a transparent substance, a reflector arranged in proximity thereto so as to cause the rays of light to pass through such substance onto the surface or scene to be illuminated, and means for causing the variously colored portions of such substance to pass successively in front of the reflector, substantially as described.

4. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a variously colored sheet or drum composed of a transparent substance, a duplew reflector or "illumiscope" arranged in proximity to such substance so as to cause the rays of light to pass therethrough onto the surface or scene to be illuminated, means for passing the variously colored portions of such substance in front of such reflector, and mechanism for adjusting the reflector so as to control the direction, amount, and extension of light that may be thrown upon such surface, substantially as described.

5. In an apparatus for producing scenic effects, the combination of the colorator, the illumiscope, and means substantially as described, for caus-

ing the variously colored portions of the colorator to pass successively the opening in the illumiscope for the passage of light, substantially as de-

scribed.

6. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a rotary drum having upon its periphery a variously colored substance which will permit the passage of light therethrough, a lamp fitted within the drum, and means for rotating the drum so as to cause the light from the lamp to pass successively through the variously colored portions of such substance to the surface on which the rays of light may fall, substantially as described.

7. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a rotary drum having on its periphery a variously colored substance which will permit the passage of light therethrough, a reflector fitted within the drum, and means for rotating the latter so as to cause the light to pass successively through the variously colored portions of such substance to the surface on which the rays of light may fall, substantially as de-

scribed.

8. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a rotary drum whose peripheral surface is composed of variously colored transparent material, an adjustable segmental reflector or illumiscope rotatably fitted within the drum, means for rotating the latter, and mechanism for adjusting the illumiscope so as to control the amount and extension of light which may pass through such transparent material to the surface to be illuminated, substantially as described.

9. In an apparatus for producing scenic effects, the illumiscope consisting of the independent rotatable seg-

ments having concave reflecting surfaces and means for independently rotating the segments, substantially as described.

10. An apparatus for producing scenic effects, comprising a series of rotary drums having peripheral surfaces composed of variously colored transparent material, lamps fixed within said drums, and means for simultaneously rotating the latter so as to cause the light from the lamps to pass successively through the variously colored portions of the transparent material to the surface or scene to be illuminated, substantially as described.

11. In an apparatus for producing scenic effects the combination with the rotatable colorator, of the auxiliary rotatable colorator and means for rotating both colorators, sub-

stantially as described.

12. In combination with the rotatable colorator and mechanism for rotating the same, the auxiliary rerovable colorator and means for rotating the latter simultaneously with the former, substantially as described.

13. In an apparatus for producing scenic effects, the combination with the rotatable colorator, the illumiscope placed therein, means for adjusting the latter so as to control the amount and extension of light which may pass through said colorator, the auxiliary colorators, and mechanism for simultaneously rotating the several colorators, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

STEELE MACKAYE.

Witnesses:

POWELL CROSLEY, SIDNEY CLARKE WHITE, JR.

V.—SLIDING STAGE.

SPECIFICATION FORMING PART OF LETTERS PATENT No. 490,485, DATED JANUABY 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,293. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MAC-KAYE, etc.

My invention relates to improvements in stage appliances, and has special reference to devices for pro-

ducing scenic effects.

The object of the invention is to provide a sliding or movable stage and means for handling or moving and controlling the movements of stages or stage equipments and scenery with facility so as to adapt such devices to be easily moved forward or back, sidewise or in an oblique direction across or in front of a proscenium opening, and to readily change the direction of motion so as to produce the desired result in shifting set or other scenes or stage appliances or equipments.

The invention will first be described in connection with the accompanying drawings and then pointed out in the claims at the end of this

specification.

Referring to the drawings in which similar letters of reference are used to denote similar parts in each of the several views, Figure 1, represents a side elevation of a stage embodying my invention; Fig. 2 is a top plan, illustrating the steering mechanism in dotted lines; Fig. 3 is a bottom plan of the same; and Fig. 4, is a transverse section thereof.

A, denotes an elevated platform or stage, which may be of any desired construction and of any suitable size and dimensions, and which is mounted upon wheels B, B, so that it may be easily moved when desired. The wheels B, are preferably journaled in the lower ends of bifurcated standards b, b, the upper ends of which are provided with vertical studs or spindles which are journaled or swiveled in the frame pieces a, a, of the stage proper A.

C, denotes an oscillating lever which may be pivoted to a crosspiece a' of the frame underneath the floor of the stage, and is preferably connected at one end to an operating rod or handle C', and at the opposite end to a longitudinally sliding or reciprocating rod D, by means of a stud or pin d, upon the rod working in a slot c, of the lever. One end of the rod D is connected to a bracket or arm d' projecting inwardly from one of the rear wheel standards b, and the opposite end of said rod is pivoted to a corresponding arm e of a bell-crank lever or bracket E, secured to the front standard b, at the same side of the stage. The opposite set of wheel-standards b, b, are similarly connected by a longitudinally reciprocating rod D' one end of which is pivoted to an arm d^2 , on the rear standard b, while the opposite end thereof is pivoted to an arm e' of a bracket or bellcrank lever E', secured to the front wheel standard on the same side of the stage.

F denotes a transversely arranged reciprocating rod the ends of which are pivoted to the rearwardly projecting ams e^2 , e^3 , of the bell-crank levers E, E', so as to form a pivotal connection between the same and said bell-crank levers and longitudinally reciprocating rods D, D', whereby the four (more or less) supporting and steering wheels are adapted to be simultaneously turned on their vertical pivots or spindles to cause them to move in accord with each other in any desired direction: their horizontal axles being parallel with each other. By this means, when the wheels are in the position indicated in Figs. 1 and 2, the stage may be moved longitudinally, and by manipulating the actuating rod C' the steering wheels may be turned either

to the right or left for the purpose of causing the stage to move at any desired angle either forward or back, or across the platform or foundation on which it is mounted, so as to permit a series of independent stages to be propelled back and forth or at any desired angle in respect to each other for the purpose of exhibiting paintings, statuary, scenery or whatever may be desired in producing scenic effects: one stage being adapted to be moved across the path or at right angles to another or in an oblique direction in respect thereto or parallel therewith, and at the same or different rates of speed for the purpose of producing the desired perspec-

tive or other scenic effect.

While I have designed this steering mechanism specially for stages, it is manifest that the same may be applied to various other uses and to stage or other furniture if desired, and hence I do not desire to be limited in the application of the invention to the particular use stated. It is also apparent that the arrangement of the rods and levers may be varied in a number of ways for accomplishing the simultaneous movement of the steering wheels, so as to cause the stage to move in the desired direction. For instance, an extension of one of the longitudinal or transverse rods may serve as a lever for moving the wheels and instead of two longitudinal rods a single rod may be employed with two transverse rods connecting the wheels at the ends of the stage. If desired a hand lever and rack-bar for securing and holding the parts in the desired adjustment may be connected with the free end of the actuating rod C' or may be substituted for the oscillating lever and rod by interposing a connecting link between said lever and one of the longitudinally reciprocating rods.

Having thus described my invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:—

1. A movable stage comprising a

suitable platform mounted on steering wheels or rollers having their axles or spindles arranged parallel with each other and fitted in rotable standards or supports, together with mechanism connecting the rotable supports to a common actuating lever, whereby the several wheels may be moved in unison for the purpose of changing the direction of motion, substantially as described.

2. In combination with the stage or platform, the vertically pivoted rotable wheel supports or standards, the wheels journaled in said standards, the longitudinally reciprocating rods pivotally connecting said standards in pairs, the transverse rod connecting two standards of opposite pairs of wheels, and means for reciprocating said rods so as to simultaneously rotate said wheel supports in the same direction, substantially

as described.

3. In stage appliances, the combination with the movable platform or body, the pivotally connected steering and supporting wheels or rollers journaled in rotable supports beneath said body and mechanism for simultaneously rotating said supports in the same direction so as to control the movements of the body, substan-

tially as described.

4. In combination with the stage and wheeled supports pivoted thereto, the steering mechanism comprising a pair of reciprocating rods and a transverse rod pivotally connecting arms or brackets pojecting fom the pivoted wheeled supports, an oscillating lever having one arm pivoted to one of said rods, and an actuating rod pivoted to the other arm thereof and provided with a suitable handle, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two wit-

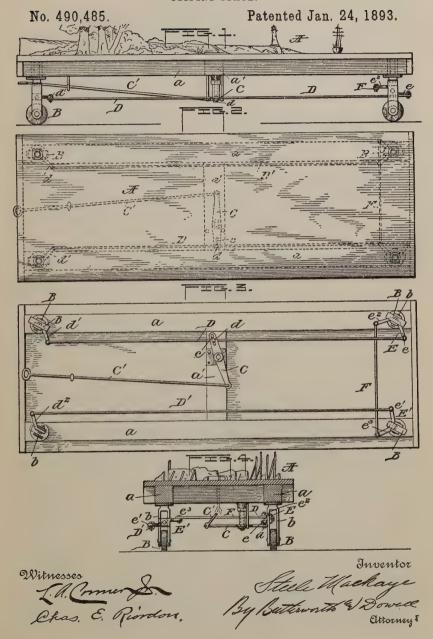
nesses.

STEELE MACKAYE.

Witnesses:

POWELL CROSLEY, SIDNEY CLARKE WHITE, JR.

S. MACKAYE.
SLIDING STAGE.



VI.—FLOATING STAGE.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 490,488, dated January 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,296. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MAC-

KAYE, etc.

My invention relates to theatrical appliances, and has special reference to apparatus for producing scenic

effects.

The object of the invention is to provide an improved floating stage which is susceptible of a to and fro or rotary movement and may be propelled forward and back or in a curvilinear direction upon an artificial lake, tank or other body of water and sustained when desired in a fixed position in respect to other objects or other stages of the same kind arranged in proximity thereto, so that scenery, paintings or other objects or persons placed on the stages may be exhibited to an audience through the usual proscenium opening of a theater or other structure adapted for the exhibition of spectacular, dramatic, or other performances.

The invention will first be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, and then pointed out in the claims at the end of this

specification.

Referring particularly to the drawings, which form a part of this specification and in which similar letters of reference are used to denote similar parts, Figure 1, represents a plan of a floating stage embodying my invention; the stage floor or deck being partly broken away to show the arrangement of parts underneath; Fig. 2, is a sectional side elevation of the invention.

A, denotes the stage as a whole, which may consist of a suitable body or hull having the floor or deck A' supported a sufficient distance above the bottom A^2 , to permit a person of ordinary height to stand thereon for the purpose of manipulating the propelling and sustaining mechanism which is arranged so as to be operated from the interior of the hull.

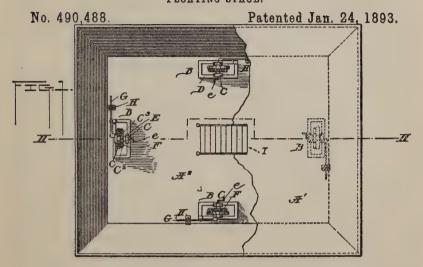
B, B, B, denote the propelling and sustaining mechanisms, comprising four (more or less) wheels or rollers C, and suitable connections for raising and lowering said wheels and also for rotating the same so as to move the stage in any desired direction or for the purpose of sustaining the stage in a fixed position when the several wheels are lowered so as to rest upon the platform or other foundation forming the bottom of the lake or tank containing the water upon which the stage may float. In are provided, though a less number the arrangement shown four wheels may be employed. One wheel is placed centrally of the stage at each end and side thereof; the two wheels at the sides and ends being arranged opposite each other so that when the two side wheels are raised and the end wheels lowered the stage may be moved sidewise, and when the two end wheels are raised and the two side wheels lowered it may be moved lengthwise, or forward and back. Inasmuch as these several sustaining and propelling mechanisms are alike a description of one will be a sufficient description of the construction of all, and therefore reference will be made particularly to one set only.

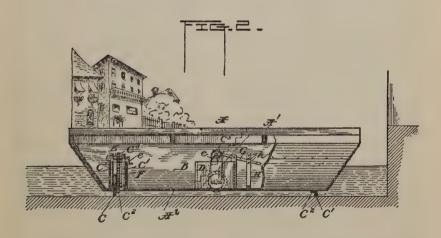
C', C', denote vertically movable slides which are fitted in suitable ways upon the inner walls of a curb or open-minded watertight box D, the upper end of which projects up into the interior of the hull A a sufficient distance above the bottom thereof to prevent the entrance of water therethrough. The slides C', C', are provided with journal boxes or bearings at each end, and in the upper set of bearings is journaled a transverse shaft E, while in the lower set is journaled the axle of the wheel

C.

C² denotes a toothed wheel or pulley fixed upon the shaft of the wheel C, and C³ a similar wheel or pulley,

S. MACKAYE.
FLOATING STAGE.





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but of less diameter than the wheel

C2, fixed upon the shaft E.

F, is an endless chain or belt connecting the wheels C², C³, so as to impart motion from the wheel C³ to the wheel C² when the shaft E is rotated. The shaft E carries at one end a crank handle e.

G denotes a hand-lever the short arm of which is pivoted to the upper end or ends of the slides C', while its long arm is adjustably secured to a slotted or other suitable standard or rack-bar H, which latter may have a series of holes h, formed therein to receive a transverse pin, by which means the lever may be adjusted and held in a fixed position with the wheel C, elevated above the bottom of the hull, or lowered beneath the

same, as may be desired.

By the described construction, with the several wheels and their operating mechanisms located as above described, by elevating the pair of wheels at the ends or sides of the stage and depressing the pair which is arranged at right angles thereto, the stage may be moved lengthwise or sidewise by rotating the crank shafts E of the depressed pair; and when the wheels are in the position just described, by allowing one crank axle to remain stationary and operating the crank at the opposite side or end of the stage, the latter may be rotated about the stationary wheels as a fixed center, or by rotating the crank axles at the sides or ends of the stage in opposite directions, or the wheels of each pair in opposite directions a rotary movement may be effected either to the right or left, according to the direction of rotation, by the action of either or both pair of wheels and operating mechanisms.

I, denotes a hatchway for the ingress or egress of operators, which may be provided with any suitable cover, preferably arranged on a level with the floor or deck, and steps or other means may be provided to enable the operators to readily enter or leave the interior of the hull. If necessary ports or openings for the admission of air and light may also be provided in the body or hull of the float.

It is manifest that the mechanism for effecting the movements of the stage may be modified in a number of ways, and that the location and arrangement of the several parts may be varied to meet various requirements without departing from the spirit of my invention. Hence, I do not desire to be limited to the exact construction and arrangement of parts shown and described.

Having thus fully described my invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of

the United States, is:-

1. In theatrical appliances, a movable floating stage and mechanism, substantially as described, for propelling the stage to and fro or sustaining it in a fixed position partly submerged in water, substantially as described.

2. A floating stage comprising a suitable hull or body adapted to be partially submerged in or float upon a body of water, vertically adjustable supporting wheels whereby the stage may be sustained in a fixed position or moved to and fro upon the water, and means for raising and lowering said wheels and for rotating the same, substantially as described.

3. A floating stage comprising al suitable hull or body mounted upon wheels which have their bearings in vertically adjustable slides, means for adjusting said slides and locking the wheels in the desired position, and mechanism for rotating the wheels for the purpose of moving the stage when partly submerged in water, substantially as described.

4. In theatrical appliances, a movable rotable floating stage, and mechanism substantially as described for effecting the movements of the stage and sustaining it in a fixed position partly submerged in water.

substantially as described.

5. In combination with the floating stage having the hull with curb projecting upwardly therein, the vertically movable slides, the hand lever, the crank shaft and supporting wheel journaled in said slides, and gearing connecting said shaft and wheel whereby the latter may be rotated, substantially as described.

6. In combination with the floating stage having the curb extending upwardly through the bottom thereof, the vertically movable slides, the crank shaft and supporting wheel journaled in opposite ends of said slides, the toothed wheels and end-

less chain connecting said shaft and supporting wheel and the hand lever and means for adjusting and securing said supporting wheel in the desired position, substantially as described.

7. In combination with the floating stage having the curbs therein arranged at the sides and ends of the stage, the vertically adjustable slides fitted in said curbs and having the supporting wheels journaled therein; the end wheels being arranged at right angles to the wheels at the side of the stage, the crank axles also journaled in said slides, the toothed wheels fixed on said crank and wheel shafts, the endless chains connecting said toothed wheels, the hand levers pivoted to said slides, and the perforated standards or

rack-bars and means for adjustably securing said levers thereto, substantially as described.

8. In combination with the floating stage, the vertically adjustable supporting wheel journaled in slides which project into the interior of the hull, the crank shaft also journaled in said slides, and gearing connecting said crank shaft and wheel for the purpose of rotating the wheel, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two wit-

nesses.

STEELE MACKAYE.

Witnesses:

POWELL CROSLEY, SIDNEY CLARKE WHITE, JR.

VII.—PROSCENIUM-ADJUSTER.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 490,482, dated January 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,290. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MAC-

KAYE, etc.

My invention relates to theatrical appliances, and the object is to provide means for regulating the size of the proscenium opening to conform to the various requirements and uses to which a theater or other similar structure may be put; it being sometimes necessary, particularly in the exhibition of spectacular or scenic effects, to provide a large opening in order to properly display a set-scene or other scenic arrangement, and immediately after to reduce the size of the opening so as to exhibit the scene in part only, or partially conceal from view the scenic arrangements, objects, or persons on the stage or platform in rear of the proscenium opening.

To this end I have devised improved means for enlarging and contracting the proscenium opening at will, so that without a moment's delay and almost imperceptibly to

the audience, except as to the result, and during the performance or exhibition, the opening may be enlarged or contracted in conformity with the requirements of the occasion.

The invention will first be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, and then particularly pointed out in the claims at the end

of this specification.

Referring to the drawings, which form a part of this specification, and in which similar letters of reference are used to denote similar parts, Figure 1 represents a front elevation, partly in section, of the proscenium of a theater, or other similar edifice, with my improvements applied thereto; and Fig. 2 is a horizontal section of the same.

A, A', denote laterally movable slides or wings which may be hung upon suitable rolls a, a', adapted to travel upon a track or rail D, which may be fixed above the proscenium arch or opening P, within the recessed wall as shown.

B, denotes a vertically movable slide or drop, which extends across the proscenium opening at right angles to the side wings A, A', and is adapted to move in suitable guides b, b. The slide B, is suspended by means of the cords or cables B', B², the ends of which are secured to said slide. From the point of attachment to the slide B, the cords B', B², pass over friction rolls or pulleys b', b², and b³, b⁴, respectively, and have their opposite ends secured to the enlarged portion of a drum or shaft E or to pulleys B³, B⁴, fixed on said shaft.

C, C', denote endless cords or cables which may be fixed as at a2, a3, to the lateral slides A, A', so as to cause said slides to move with the cords. The cord C, has one end fixed to a reduced portion of the drum or shaft E, or to a pulley fixed on said shaft, and passes thence over friction rolls c', c^2 , c^3 , and around the latter back past its point of attachment a2, to the slide A over a friction roll c4, and thence to the opposite side of the shaft E or pulley on said shaft. The cord C', passes in a similar manner from a correspondingly reduced section or pulley on the shaft E, over friction rolls or pulleys c^5 , c^6 , and around the latter back past its point of attachment at a3, to the slide A' over friction roll c^7 , and thence to the opposite side of the shaft E or pulley on said shaft. By this means, when the shaft E revolves one end of each cord or cable C, C', will be wound upon the shaft E, while the opposite ends of said cords are being unwound therefrom, and as the slides or wings A, A', must move with the cords, said wings may be made to approach or recede from each other, so as to enlarge or contract the proscenium opening, according to the direction in which the shaft E is rotated. The same movement of the shaft will raise or lower the vertical slide or drop B, by winding the cords B', B², upon the pulleys B³, B⁴, or unwinding the same, so that when the lateral slides are moved inwardly the vertical slide will be simultaneously lowered, and vice versa thus enlarging or contracting the proscenium opening uniformly on all sides by the simultaneous movements of the vertical and lateral slides.

It will be observed that inasmuch as there are two lateral slides and but one vertical slide, the width of the proscenium opening would be contracted or enlarged more rapidly than the depth, if all the slides were permitted to move at the same rate of speed. I therefore provide a winding drum or shaft in the form of a differential windlass with enlarged and reduced portions or with pulleys of unequal diameters fixed thereon, and secure the ends of the cords B'. B2, to the enlarged portion, or larger pulleys, and the ends of the cords C, C', to the reduced portion, or smaller pulleys, so that the slide B may move about twice as rapidly as the slides A, A', and thereby increase or decrease the depth of the opening uniformly with the increasing or decreasing of its width.

F denotes a pulley or band wheel by which power may be applied to the shaft E, or any suitable means may be employed for this purpose.

The proscenium opening may be of any desired size according to the size of the building or the wishes of the constructor, and although my present invention is designed particularly for regulating the size of openings of a large area, it is equally well adapted for use in theaters and similar buildings with openings of ordinary size, and hence I do not desire to limit the application of the invention to any particular use.

The arrangement of the operating mechanism may also be varied in a number of ways and various devices may be employed for effecting the simultaneous adjustment of the vertical and lateral slides. If desired mechanism may also be provided whereby the vertical and lateral slides may be adjusted independently of each other, and while I preferably employ means for accomplishing the simultaneous adjustment of all the slides, I do not desire to be limited to the exact construction and arrangement of parts shown and described herein.

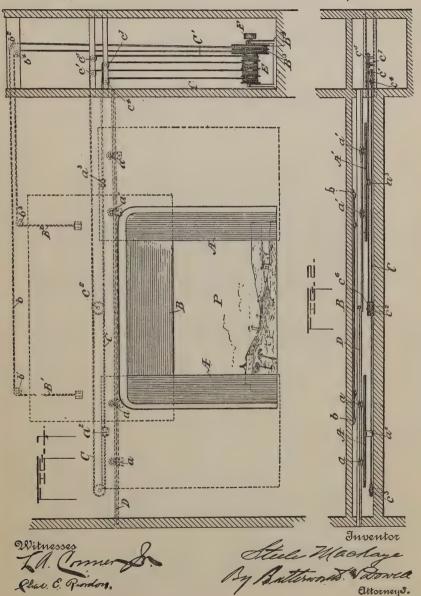
Having thus fully described my invention what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States, is:—

1. In combination with the proseeneum opening of a theater or similar structure, the laterally adjustable

S. MACKAYE. PROSCENIUM ADJUSTER.

No. 490,482.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.



side wings or slides, the vertically adjustable slide or drop, and means for adjusting the same, substantially as

described.

2. In combination with the proscenium opening of a theater or similar structure the laterally adjustable slides, the vertically adjustable drop, and means for simultaneously adjusting said slides and drop so as to uniformly enlarge or contract the proscenium opening, substantially as described.

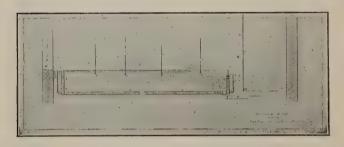
3. In combination with the proscenium opening of a theater or similar structure the laterally adjustable side wings or slides, the vertically adjustable drop and means for simultaneously adjusting the drop and slides, so as to cause the drop to move at a greater rate of speed than the side wings, for the purpose of uniformly enlarging or contracting the proseenium opening, substantially as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

s.
STEELE MACKAYE.

Witnesses:

POWELL CROSLEY, SIDNEY CLARKE WHITE, JR.



DETAIL OF SPECTATORIUM (Basement Plane: cf. p. ii, 21): Section of Stage, Showing Footlights, Horizon Lights, Mist Pipes, etc. (Perpendicular lines at left denote "Stage Opening.")

LETTER FROM A. F. VICTOR, Vice President of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, to Percy MacKaye: 5 April 1927 (from 242 W. 55th

St., New York):

"My dear Mr. MacKaye—I have greatly enjoyed the task of checking over the patent papers which cover your Father's many inventions. To properly place these inventions and to analyse them would require months. It is my intention to go into this matter fully at an early date, and prepare a paper on the subject to be submitted to the Society of Motion Picture Engineers.—I know that you desire to have my opinion as to what influence, if any, your Father's ideas may have had in the development of the motion picture industry. I also think that you would be glad to learn what I think of the practicability of your Father's inventions.

"I am glad to state that I have found nothing which is not entirely practical. The patent specifications do not always show the best method or the simplest, but they show as practical methods as any inventor, including myself, can hope to convey, since the practice is to cover an idea broadly rather than to reduce principles to a single

best one.

"I am greatly impressed by the fact that many of the methods we employ nowadays in motion picture making were originated by your Father for use in his Spectatorium. Whether his ideas were remembered and put to use later on, or whether they were rediscovered, is difficult to state without a certain amount of investigation. Chicago was one of the early picture-producing centres, and it is quite possible that some of the men who knew your Father and his plans later on engaged

in the picture industry.

"It is especially interesting to note that the means employed by Steele MacKaye for the reproduction of atmospheric phenomena, and which were patented by him in 1893, are identical with those now in common practice. Broad protection appears to have been given on his use of an airblast in connection with water for the production of rain storms. The Wave Maker is another instance of this sort. Many turbulent Ocean scenes have been manufactured in just the manner suggested. The Cloud-producing scheme is another example of priority of conception.—I do not find in your Father's work anything to suggest that he was aware of the existence of motion pictures. But I find every indication that the thing which to-day has developed into the most powerful form of public entertainment was in his mind and that he recognized the appeal of that form of entertainment.

"Had the motion picture machine been a practical thing in 1893, your Father would, I think, have adopted it as a medium for his presentations. All he needed at the time would have been a motion picture camera and a sensitized ribbon of celluloid. Everything else he had provided. Even titles and subtitles had been recognized by him as an essential to proper presentation, and these did not arrive in the picture industry until after many years of exploitation of the pictures

themselves.

"It is evident to any one familiar with the art of motion pictures

that your Father was attempting to produce the same effects that pictures rather than the stage can give, and in practically the same manner.—The Spectatorium would have made an ideal picture studio. The equipment would have been very complete. Many scenes now taken on location could have been produced entirely within the building and in the early days of picture making, when most scenes were taken indoors, it would have improved the quality of pictures by the unusual

equipment available.

"When motion pictures were first used as public entertainment they came in the form of a novelty. The only claim for attention lay in the fact that these pictures 'moved.' The first public exhibition of these (undramatic) pictures was in 1895. As the years passed on, it seemed that these pictures would die from lack of public interest, for their makers were not theatre artists, and this motion of the pictures was not 'dramatized.' The only pictures available were short scenes of isolated incidents.—Slumbering and unrecognized lay the future industrial giant.—At last, early in the present century, a first real story was told by 'movies.' Then sustained interest was recognized for the first time. People began to take notice. Nickelodeons sprang into existence over night. Producing companies were working day and night to keep pace with a new demand. Studios were known to produce as many as three complete productions in a single day. Directors invented plots while actually 'shooting' and megaphones bawled orders on the spur of the moment to actors who knew nothing of what was being made. Footage became the daily cry. Miles of film spanned the inhabited globe and the new gold rush was on.

"By his death, in 1894, Steele MacKaye missed the first public exhibition of motion pictures by only a year, though a decade was to pass before the picture industry was to grasp something of his earlier realization of the possibilities of pictorial motion as a form

of dramatic entertainment.

"What an opportunity the motion picture would have given to him! Actor, Producer, Inventor—the man who invented a stage with the firmament for a roof, who devised a universe of waving palm trees and turbulent seas, where the winds and suns and stars were pawns in a game of realism, and where colors played riot. The work of this man of the theatre, Steele MacKaye, assuredly has its place in history as of one who invented the practical theatrical instruments for a drama of motion some years in advance of the time when the mation picture first began to exist as a dramatic form of theatrical entertainment. To what extent his inventions and the exhibitions of his models at Chicago, in the early 'Nineties, influenced later motion picture developments is also a matter worthy of serious research, for the sake of historical record.—Sincerely yours, A. F. Victor."

Note by P. M-K.—In his Spectatorium, Steele MacKaye was backed by capitalists who invested their money for the purpose of promoting, through his ideas and labours, only the highest forms of popular theatre art. Consequently, if the Spectatorium had been launched, as they had hoped, in 1893, an enormously resourceful institution, backed by great wealth, would have been in the strategic position to develop

the motion picture art, from its very beginnings, on the highest plane, in accordance not only with the technical expertness of Steele MacKaye, but also with his artistic and civic ideals; and there might have been written a very different history of the motion picture and its world influences from that which has actually occurred during the twentieth century.

POSTSCRIPT

Oscar Wilde, Charles Reade, W. D. Howells, etc.

In the last hours of putting these volumes through the press, I have just rediscovered, among other belongings of my father, a bundle of letters and manuscript (laid away by me many years ago in an old chest), containing the

following items:-

Writings of Oscar Wilde, in his own handscript, comprising outlines of some early plays by him apparently not included in his published works, as well as a six-page letter from Wilde, dated "Halifax, N. Scotia" (envelope postmarked, received in New York, October 12, '82), addressed, "U.S.—Steele MacKaye, % F. M. Pirrson, 1251 Broadway, New York City," beginning: "My Dear Steele, Mary Anderson has written to me, accepting you as Director and supreme autocrat." (Toward the end, he writes: "I will be at the Vendome Hotel, Boston, on Sunday next.")—Three letters from Charles Reade (two to "J. S. MacKaye, Esq., Madison Square Theatre, New York City" and one to Mrs. J. S. MacKaye), dated July 30 (1880), Feb. 5, Feb. 21 (no year date). In the first he writes: "Since the death of Mrs. Seymour I have no heart to sit down and write a new play."—Four letters to Steele MacKaye from Wilkie Collins, London, Feb. 9, 10, 27, and May 26, 1873.—A letter to my father from William Dean Howells (dated "The Niagara, Buffalo, Dec. 25, 1887"), in which he writes, referring to the New York opening of Paul Kauvar: "I hope the play prospered last night and is blessed to a long career. . . . Let my aspirations pass as a proof of my regard for you."—Various letters to Steele MacKaye from Lawrence Barrett (re "Rienzi"), Edwin Booth (re a dinner to Wallack), John A. Cockerell, Moses P. Handy, C. W. Couldock, S. S. Curry, Stuart Robson, General Horace Porter, Jeannette Thurber, etc.

The Masque of Saint Louis, Charles A. Lindbergh

Apropos of the Masque of Saint Louis (in which the Spirit of Saint Louis was the protagonist) cited on page ii, 480, and of Lindbergh's recent first non-stop Atlantic flight with the Spirit of Saint Louis, there has just been sent to me by Ralph Renaud, editor of the New York Evening Post, an article in that journal (June 18, 1927) headed by the photograph of the Forest Park Saint Louis audience, on Plate 93, with the caption:—"Lindy alights at St. Louis as Eagle did in Prophecy of Masque, written for City by Percy MacKaye in 1914. . . . The striking connection with the festival there in honor of Lindbergh is the theme of MacKaye's masque itself—the growth of world co-operation—which culminates in the flight of an airplane as a vast eagle, scattering the fire of brotherhood in the night, hailed by a new-born 'League of Cities' in the closing chorus. . . Now, after all these years, to-day that Eagle has returned, in the real, living, youthful form of Charles A. Lindbergh, his mission fulfilled."

On June 12, 1927, in the New York *Times*, had appeared my poem on Lindbergh, "Winged Victory," and on June 5, in the Saint Louis *Globe-Democrat*, an article (by Luther Ely Smith of the Saint Louis 1914 festival committee), from which the following is an excerpt:—"A prophetic vision conceived by Percy MacKaye in writing the Masque of Saint Louis, produced May, 1914, in Forest Park, has been fulfilled by Capt. Charles A. Lindbergh. . . . The most dramatic scene is the close of the masque . . . the dialogue between *Saint Louis* and

Wasapedan, the Great Bear of the Milky Way:

Wasapedan: Behold the wings! Saint Louis: What wings? Wasapedan:

Eagle's wings.

Saint Louis: What eagle flies? Wasapedan: America. Your league Rides on his wings and rises toward the stars.

P.M.-K.—Shirley Centre, Mass., July 1, 1927.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A NOTE

Among the biographer's records, preserved in scrapbooks, are hundreds of published articles on Steele MacKaye and his works, taken from the contemporary press. These comprise about four million words. Many are quoted in *Epoch*. Other records not included in *Epoch*, copied in typewriting and preserved in files, comprise several hundred thousand words.

In a book, Today in America, (Chapman, Hall; London, 1881), by Joseph Hatton, English novelist, Hatton comments as follows on Mac-

Kaye and his Madison Square Theatre:

"Mr. Steele MacKaye is a younger and bolder man than Mr. Wallack. He has built a theatre that may well be called a temple of the Drama; and he finds that the virtues of love and faith are still talismans to move the human heart and fill the theatrical treasury. Let us hope this gleam of light in the dramatic darkness of New York will spread until it illumines the entire art world. . MacKaye can do everything connected with a theatre from carpentry to playwriting. His theatre is a model of architectural skill and artistic decoration. No theatre in Europe combines so many excellences and novelties as Mr. MacKaye's little house near Madison Square."

Hatton also writes on MacKaye in Warner's International Manual (1881).

An article on Delsarte and MacKaye, by S. S. Curry, appeared in

The Voice, March, 1885.

Some articles written by Steele MacKaye are: François Delsarte (article signed by Francis Durivage, but prepared by MacKaye (cf. p. i, 146), in Atlantic Monthly, May, 1871. Safety in Theatres, in North American Review, November, 1882 (cf. p. ii, 435). How Plays are Written, in Syndicated Press, July 27, 1889 (quoted on p. ii, 216). On Stage Setting, in Harper's Weekly, Feb. 15 (?), 1889 (cf. p. ii, 209). A Round Robin Talk (with Edward Harrigan, Berry Wall and J. H. Stoddart) in Lippincott's Magazine, October, 1890. Steele MacKaye and François Delsarte, An Article Outlining Their Personal Relations (signed by Mrs. Steele MacKaye, but in part prepared by Steele MacKaye), in Werner's Voice Magazine, July, 1892.

An Oration by Steele MacKaye on John McCullough, delivered by him at McCullough's grave, Mount Moriah Cemetery, near Philadelphia, November 27, 1888, is published in a volume (limited edition, 500 copies), entitled In Memory of John McCullough, New York, The

De Vinne Press, 1889.

Articles on Steele MacKaye and Percy MacKaye (with portraits,

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one by Mrs. Kenyon Cox), written by Norman Hapgood, Aug. 27, 1904, and by Arthur Hornblow, about 1907, appeared, respectively, in Collier's Weekly and in The Theatre Magazine. Norman Hapgood commented: "Steele MacKaye's mind, overflowing with vitality, was full of science, art and every human interest."

In April, 1923, The Theatre Arts Monthly published an article by Percy MacKaye, The Theatre of Ten Thousand, concerning Steele MacKaye's Spectatorium. Cf. in Epoch Percy MacKaye's exposition of the Spectatorium, its Art (p. ii, 428-429), its Stage (ii, 327), its Scope and Philosophy (ii, 346-348). Cf. also "Some Innovations of Steele MacKaye" in front matter of Volume Two, p. xxi.

A sketch of the Life of James Steele MacKaye (accompanied by a portrait and containing several inaccuracies) is published in the National Cyclopædia of American Biography, Vol. XIV, Supplement I,

New York, 1910.

Only two of Steele MacKaye's plays (Hazel Kirke and Paul Kauvar) have been published. The many others—listed in the chart on pages II, xvi, xvii,—remain still in manuscript, unavailable: some in several versions, in difficult handscript; some with apparently only one copy existing; all stored in places none too safe from fire-risk. Hopefully, at least a selection of them may yet be collected and published. Meantime, the pages of Epoch convey some idea of the impress they made on their own time, through their expert production under their author's direction; and for that, of course, they were written; for Steele MacKaye—in common with all his dramatist-contemporaries—never wrote, or intended, his plays for publication.

Comments on Steele MacKaye are included in nearly all the works of William Winter (references through indices) and in the following

books:

Playwrights of the New American Theatre, Thomas Dickinson, Macmillan, New York, 1925.

The Theatre of Tomorrow, Kenneth MacGowan, Boni and Liveright, New York, 1921.

Representative Plays by American Dramatists, Montrose J. Moses, Dutton, New York, 1921 (pp. 237-243). This volume contains the text of Steele MacKaye's play, Paul Kauvar, or Anarchy.

The American Dramatist, Montrose J. Moses, Little, Brown, Boston,

revised edition, 1925.

Representative American Plays, Arthur Hobson Quinn, Century Co., New York, 1917 (pp. 495-498). This volume contains the text of Steele MacKaye's play, Hazel Kirke. Hazel Kirke is also published in the standard paper edition of Samuel French, New York.

A new volume by Professor Quinn, on The History of American Drama, is announced for autumn publication (1927) by Harper's. In view of the fact that Epoch contains a great quantity of new material (the results of thirty years' research, never before published and nowhere else available), in regard to a leading American dramatist, whose lifework interpenetrates a whole generation of American Drama, I had eagerly hoped to be able to publish these

two volumes in time to be of service to Professor Quinn, in his own difficult and laborious task, and so to enable him (in accord with his own friendly desire) to do full justice to the career of Steele MacKaye, as dramatist, in the pages of his History.—To that end, in the early spring of '27, I sent to him printer's proofs of the complete "Contents" of Epoch, with their captions, together with a portion of the page-proof text. Unfortunately, however, it proved too late, to our sincere mutual regret. From the University of Pennsylvania. May 27, 1927, he has written me:-

"My dear Mr. MacKaye:—I am returning the "Contents" of Epoch. I have had to send the manuscript of my History to Harpers, and I regret greatly that I could not read *Epoch* before I did so. I regret even more that I could not read your father's plays in their entirety. I have made it a rule not to speak of a play unless I have either seen it or read it, and in consequence I feel that my treatment of your father's work is entirely inadequate, but I do not see how it can be helped. I have held off the manuscript from Harpers as long as it was physically possible and, moreover, I am myself about at the end of my rope, and I must get the thing off my hands!

"With best wishes, I am, Sincerely yours, Arthur H. Quinn."

In The Drama, Quarterly (November, 1911, and February, 1912) appeared the only bird's-eye view of Steele MacKaye's career written since his death till the publication of Epoch: an article, in two parts, by Percy MacKaye, entitled "STEELE MACKAYE, An Outline of his Life-Work." This article was extensively reviewed by the New York Tribune, April 21, 1912, by the Pittsburgh Review, December 17, 1911, and by James O'Donnell Bennett, in the Chicago Record (November, 1911).—From Bennett's review the following is an excerpt:

"The impetus which Steele MacKaye gave to bold projects and exalted ideas was prodigious, and he did ten men's work in the world. His life was a resplendent success, if you consider that the ideas on the art of the Theatre which he enunciated, years ago, are only now beginning to be comprehended by the public as extraordinarily vital ideas: so vital, indeed, that the very life of the theatre as an artistic force is bound up with them. Those who are now trying to do good work for, and by, the theatre owe to Steele MacKaye more than, perhaps, they realize. During the hideous commercial rule of the stage for the last two decades, his ideas and ideals have lain fallow. But in some persons' minds his views were cherished, in the aspirations of some they lived. Through them his spirit is coming back to the field of battle. His work is taken up where he, dying too soon, laid it down, and not least worthily is it taken up by his son, whose lectures and essays on the art of the stage have been an inspiration to a wide public, representing the best. . . It is because Steele MacKaye's life meant and continues to mean, so much that we welcome this first attempt to make a record of it. Long deferred, it will be the more useful. We wish Mr. MacKaye well with his filial task, and we hope that he and the editor of The Drama will be encouraged to extend the memoir far beyond the two installments which are all that they now promise."

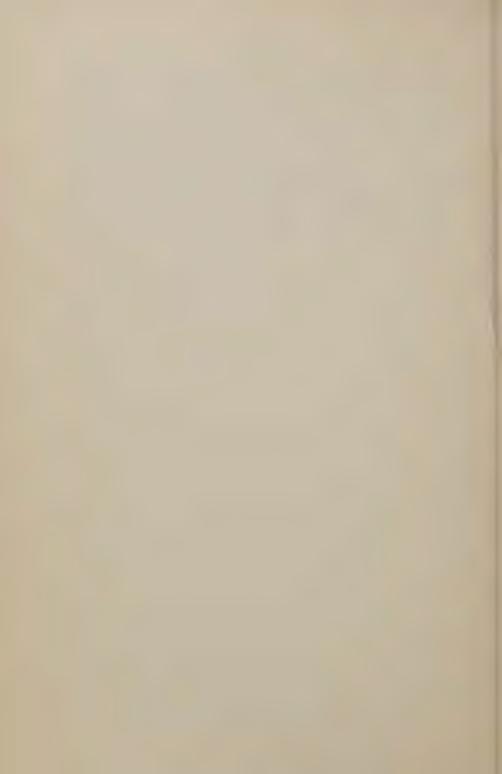
"Long deferred," indeed, has been the full completion of this memoir. Bennett's review of those two brief installments was written sixteen years ago, three years before the Great War. Since then, the war and its aftermath have, till recently, retarded the scholarly record of our cultural background of peace, especially of the American Theatre, and in consequence the life-work of Steele MacKaye (as Mr. J. Ranken Towse has stated, on page lvii) "has never yet received in full the public recognition to which his abilities and his character entitled him." (Cf. also Elwyn Barron's statement, on page lxii.)

Two main causes have conduced to that result: Steele MacKaye's many-sidedness (making his synthetic record difficult to classify), and the chaotic condition of the materials (requiring years of labour to coördinate on the part of myself, under whose roof—in a remote country studio—at least three-fourths of the materials have long been preserved). These matters have been touched upon in my Note, on pages II. xxxi and xxxii.

It is, however, my earnest hope that, henceforward, the publication of *Epoch* may be useful to future historians, and may serve to contribute its quota of substantial significance toward the total appraisal of our cultural life and evolution. With that purpose these two volumes are respectfully submitted, in the truth of record.

PERCY MACKAYE.

Cornish, N. H., 31 May, 1927.



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INDEX

TO VOLUMES ONE AND TWO

Note: This Index has been compiled by Alleyne Ireland, Esq., author of "Democracy and the Human Equation," "The New Korea," etc., already referred to in the Note of Acknowledgment at the beginning of Volume One. The author of Epoch takes this further occasion to express his sincere indebtedness to Mr. Ireland who, when he was in the throes of seeing this work through the press, undertook as an act of friendship the difficult and laborious task of indexing both of these volumes.

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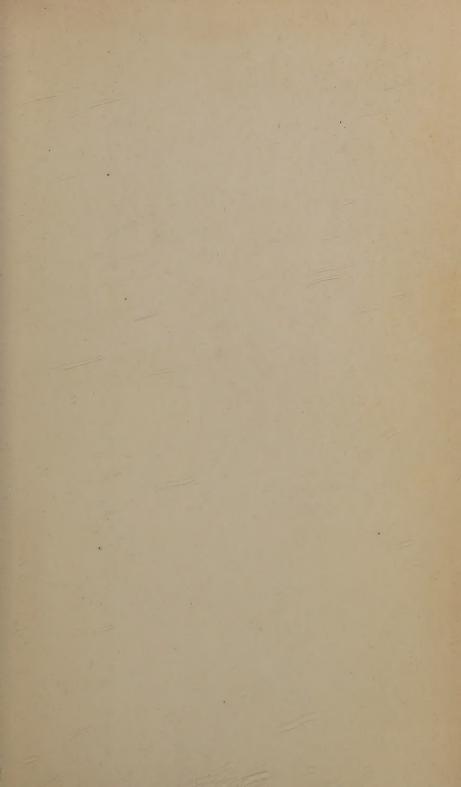
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